CANADA'S HISTORY

FORMERLY THE BEAVER

INSIDE FIGHTING THE FENIANS

HELLO!

MY NAME IS CANADA

eh?

ROY MACGREGOR
ON THE ESSENCE OF BEING CANADIAN

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REX MURPHY ON NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR'S BLOODIEST BATTLE

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The importance of understanding ourselves by examining our history has been an anchoring belief of Canada's History Society. Established in 1994 through the generous support of the Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation, we bring relevance and awareness to our nation's diverse past; illuminating the people, places, and events that unite us as Canadians.

The society's work includes: *Canada's History* magazine, *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, CanadasHistory.ca, and the Governor General's History Awards.

SOCIÉTÉ HISTOIRE CANADA

L'importance de comprendre notre propre identité par le truchement de l'histoire est au cœur de la philosophie de la Société Histoire Canada. Le travail de la Société, fondée en 1994 grâce au généreux soutien de la Fondation d'histoire de la Compagnie de la baie d'Hudson, consiste à faire connaître le passé diversifié de notre pays et à l'ancrer dans le contexte actuel, mais également à mettre en valeur les gens, les lieux et les événements qui nous unissent en tant que Canadiens.

La Société offre notamment aux Canadiens le magazine *Histoire Canada*, le magazine *Kayak, Navigue dans l'histoire du Canada*, le site HistoireCanada.ca et les Prix d'histoire du Gouverneur général.

CANADA'S HISTORY · HISTOIRE CANADA · Kayak

HBC Corporate Collection. Used with permission. *Chief Trader Archibald McDonald Departing the Fraser, 1828* by Adam Sherriff Scott, ca. 1942.

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On the cover

The beaver dude was created by internationally known Toronto artist Joseph Salina under the direction of Karen Simpson. Salina specializes in political, satirical, sociological, and psychological subjects.

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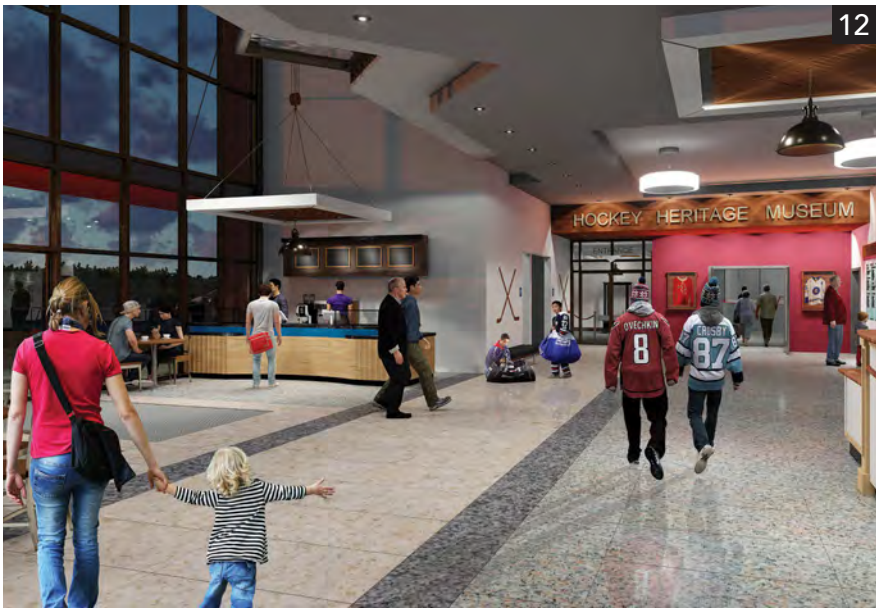

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COMING UP IN CANADA'S HISTORY

Champlain's Royal Heritage

Samuel de Champlain has been called many things, from founder of Quebec to "Sam the Sham." Now there's evidence he was the illegitimate son of a king.
Plus: The year of no summer, the rebel quilter of Singapore, and the Canadian Governor General who wrote *The 39 Steps*, a wildly popular spy novel.

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CANADA'S HISTORY

PHOTO: TRAVEL MANITOBA

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Forward thinking

Some of the men hold drinks, others hold pots to clang in celebration. A couple of soldiers sport German *pickelhaubes* as spoils of war, while one wears his Brodie helmet jauntily askew.

It's July 1, 1917, and this raucous group of Canadian soldiers, photographed in a newly recaptured village somewhere in France, are toasting the fiftieth anniversary of Confederation. The party was likely a welcome respite from a conflict that had, by then, claimed the lives of tens of thousands of Canadians.

If any of these men survived the Great War, they would have been in their seventies by the time Canada's centennial rolled around in 1967.

The centennial year was marked by miniskirts, mods, and "Strawberry Fields Forever." The centrepiece of the official celebration was Expo 67, a futuristic world's fair — complete with a monorail — that played host to everyone from Queen Elizabeth to Thelonius Monk. Today's baby boomers were just teenagers then. To them, the Great War vets must have seemed like relics.

The contrast between the fiftieth and one hundredth anniversaries of Confederation couldn't be more stark — the former, a muted commemoration by a shell-shocked nation; the latter, a boisterous and future-fixated coming-out party.

And now here we are, about to count down to Canada's 150th birthday in July 1917, and there's nary a monorail in sight.

Instead, the upcoming sesquicentennial of Confederation finds us in a troubled and reflective mood — looking hard into the mirror and uncertain at what is staring back.

At times, all we see is our failings as a nation: our historic and systemic mistreatment of indigenous peoples; our tortuous path to cultural and ethnic tolerance; the enduring linguistic divide; and an economic and political system that produces have and have-not provinces.

Many of us might be tempted to look away. But then we're reminded that, in the eyes of the world, Canada is an inspiration and an example to which some nations might wish to aspire: a prosperous land, one that respects the rule of law, promotes and celebrates diversity, and is rooted in a strong democratic tradition.

In this issue, two of Canada's leading writers grapple with notions of nationhood and the myriad ways we approach Canada Day and all it represents.

In "An Unknown Country," Roy MacGregor asks whether it's possible to measure the soul of a nation as vast, complex, diverse, and divided as Canada. Rex Murphy, meanwhile, reminds us that, in one province, July 1 is first and foremost a day of national mourning; the young Newfoundlanders who on that day, one hundred years ago, died at the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel must be commemorated before the feting of Canada can begin.

Recently, the federal government announced the themes that will guide its official sesquicentennial celebrations in 2017: youth, diversity and inclusion, the environment, and reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

These are worthy concerns. I hope — amid the hubbub of Canada 150 and the party to come, as we look so intensely to the future — that we pause to remember the many and diverse sacrifices of previous generations of Canadians. This country we tout so proudly was built on their shoulders.

Mark Reid

CONTRIBUTORS

Rex Murphy wrote "Battle Scars." He is a well-known commentator and writer who has had a long-running career with CBC. The longtime host of CBC Radio's *Cross Country Checkup* until the fall of 2015, Murphy continues to offer commentary on *The National*'s "Point of View" and writes a column for the *National Post*. He is also the winner of several broadcasting awards.

Roy MacGregor is the author of "An Unknown Country." A writer with the *Globe and Mail,* he is the author of more than forty books, including *Canadians: A Portrait of a Country and Its People*, which reflects on Canadian identity through the lens of his own experiences as an author and journalist. He has won numerous awards and was named an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2005.

Steven Henry Martin wrote "Green Terror," about the Fenian invasion of 1866. He is an independent scholar and crisis intervention worker with the police service in Peterborough, Ontario. Martin holds a master's degree in history from Trent University and his work has been published in *Briarpatch*, *Canadian Dimension*, *The Dominion*, *World History Connected,* and *TOPIA*.

PHOTO TOP LEFT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

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CANADA'S HISTORY

Potts shots off mark

Enjoyed Brian Brennan's article ["Outlaws," April-May 2016] but the claim that North-West Mounted Police guide and interpreter Jerry Potts killed two people and then got away with murder is, like so many stories about the famous plainsman, one that cannot be substantiated by facts. There is absolutely no credible evidence that Potts ever intentionally killed anyone.

I've been collecting primary source material, diaries, letters, photographs, et cetera for more than four decades, and as past president of the Fort Macleod Historical Association and the Fort Whoop-Up Interpretive Society, and a director of the Historical Society of Alberta. I've had access to a great deal of untapped material. It's also my good fortune to live where certain historical events actually transpired. The infamous Whoop-Up Trail crosses our land, Jerry Potts lies buried just ten minutes west of here, his old horse ranch is just upstream from our home place, and I can count several members of the Potts clan as my friends.

I feel that it is important to state that much of the material written about Jerry Potts and his many exploits must be classified as being "made from whole cloth" — as in fabricated.

George F. Kush
Fort Macleod, Alberta

Salute to Squire

Hats off to your article on Lorene Squire, the remarkable former *Beaver* photographer ["Picture Perfect," April-May 2016]. My favorite of her work is the photo essay she did on Fort Ross that was published in the March 1939 *Beaver*.

George Duddy
White Rock, British Columbia

Queen of the Hurricanes

In the article "20 Great Women" [February-March 2016] you did not include one architect, engineer, researcher, chemist, or doctor on your list.

Here's one that I know of well: Elsie MacGill. In 1929, she became the first woman in the world to be awarded a master's degree in aeronautical engineering. The latter she did while walking with crutches, the permanent effects of polio.

Among her many accomplishments, she was in charge of a contract to build 1,400 Hawker Hurricane fighters, one of the most advanced RAF fighters in the war and the unsung hero of the Battle of Britain.

Paul Balcaen
Winnipeg

Editor's note: Canada's History *reviewed a biography of MacGill in the October-November 2015 issue.*

Glaring oversight

In the article "20 Great Women" I'd argue that the omission of Dr. Maude Menten is a glaring oversight. Menten's name is recorded for posterity in the Michaelis-Menten equation that relates enzyme activity to substrate concentration and which continues to guide enzyme research to this day. She is one of the few women elected to the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.

David Evans
Edmonton

Whole Lotta love

There appears to be one major omission on your "20 Great Women" list: Lotta Hitschmanova, an early icon of Canadian international humanitarianism.

No less significant an institution than the Canadian Museum of History has included her as one of our founders. In 2013, the museum held a vote on who has shaped our country. "Dr. Lotta" received the highest number of votes.

David Rain
Ottawa

Three more

I was fortunate to grow up in southwestern Manitoba, where the Famous Five were familiar names. I'm now eighty-six. My suggestions for more Great Women are: agricultural journalist E. Cora Hind, ornithologist Louise de Kirline Lawrence, and Ethel Fraser of Ottawa, a founding member of the first Canadian support group for Alzheimer's. Thank you so much for a wonderful magazine!

Kathleen Merritt
North Bay, Ontario

From palate to palette

With reference to the February-March 2016 item "Following the blossoms": Egg tempera, with or without camel's urine, is a painting medium used since ancient times. Tempura is, on the contrary, I believe, a Japanese dish.

Andrea Maria Coda di San Grato
Hudson, Quebec

Errata

In the April-May issue, the article "Symbolic meaning" incorrectly located Inuvik in Nunavut. Inuvik is in Northwest Territories. In the same article the child's shoe object was found at the former site of Chooutla Residential School in Carcross, Yukon. The school burned down in 1939.

During the fur trade era, outposts regularly received "packets" of correspondence. Email your comments to editors@CanadasHistory.ca or write to Canada's History, Bryce Hall Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9 Canada.

GLENBOW ARCHIVES

Pad saddle

Tales and Treasures from the rich legacy of the Hudson's Bay Company

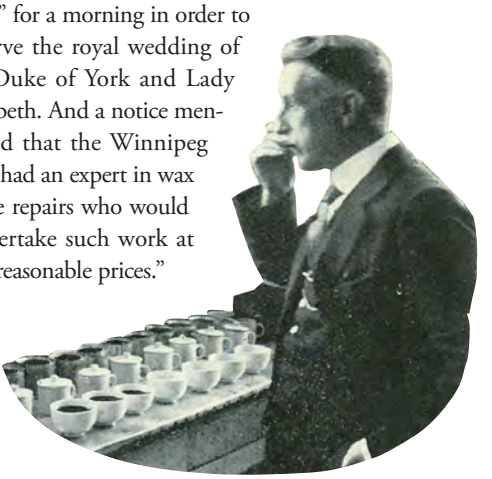
Pad saddles were used for horseback riding and were highly prized items on the northern plains, particularly during the heyday of the bison hunt. These saddles were made by women, and Métis women have been credited with exceptional expertise in the creation of beautiful pad saddles that were traded or sold to other indigenous groups and fur traders. Pad saddles were made from tanned moose hide that was stuffed with grass or horsehair and then decorated with beads or embroidery. They came in a variety of shapes and sizes. This early twentieth-century example represents a more modern variation, using canvas on the top but still retaining the tanned hide bottom and elaborate beadwork and yarn tassels. It was donated to the HBC museum collection by the proprietor of a Winnipeg taxidermy store that operated from 1880 to 1910. *— Amelia Fay, curator of the HBC Collection at the Manitoba Museum*

ARTIFACT FROM THE MANITOBA MUSEUM (HBC 46-26) / PHOTO BY ANDREW WORKMAN

IN THE BEAVER …

June 1923

Before it was subtitled "Canada's History Magazine" or "A Magazine of The North," *The Beaver* was known as "A Journal of Progress" that was "Devoted to The Interests of Those Who Serve The Hudson's Bay Company." Its June 1923 issue began with a lengthy article, "H.B.C. Wholesale-Depot," about the company's "large modern distributing centre" in Winnipeg that handled the range of supplies needed by more than two hundred HBC fur trade posts. The same article explained the operation of the "H.B.C. candy factory" and "H.B.C. tea blending and packing plant," also in Winnipeg. Teas from "India, Ceylon, Java, Japan, Formosa, and China" were prepared under the guidance of "an expert tea taster" who could recognize "the different characteristics of hundreds of kinds of tea." Several items in that issue of *The Beaver* described celebrations of the HBC's 253rd birthday at stores across the West and company sports activities. Meanwhile, Nancy Buckingham, an employee based in London, England, told of how she was permitted to "cast aside work" for a morning in order to observe the royal wedding of the Duke of York and Lady Elizabeth. And a notice mentioned that the Winnipeg store had an expert in wax figure repairs who would "undertake such work at very reasonable prices."



The Beaver magazine was originally founded as a Hudson's Bay Company publication in 1920. To read stories from past issues, go to CanadasHistory.ca/TradingPost. To explore the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, go to hbcheritage.ca, or follow HBC's Twitter and Instagram feeds at @HBCHeritage.

DRESS CODES

If the shoes fit

New exhibit explores history of indigenous Arctic footwear

To survive and thrive at the top of the world requires innovation and ingenuity. The indigenous peoples of the Arctic region crafted clothing — including footwear — that perfectly utilized local materials. A new exhibit at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto is showcasing the craftsmanship of the Inuit of Canada as well as other indigenous polar peoples.

Images provided by the Bata Shoe Museum Foundation.

Coral Harbour, Nunavut, 1987
This boot features liners of baby seal and caribou worn under inner slippers of furred seal, as well as a sealskin outer layer. Olepa Karpik, an Iglulingmiut Inuit seamstress, won a special prize for this pair in the Decorated Moccasin competition held by the Bata Shoe Museum Foundation in conjunction with the Canadian Native Arts Foundation in 1987.

Kablunangajuit, Labrador, 1880s
The distinctive smock-like pleating found on these *kamiit*, commonly called kamiks, is characteristic of Kablunangajuit work from the southern part of Labrador. The pleating of sealskin requires great skill. The distinctive colour comes from their being dyed with alder bark.

Nuuk, Greenland, 1955
In Greenland, the height of footwear traditionally differed based on gender. Men's boots typically reached mid-calf, while women's soared to mid-thigh. Black was reserved for men, while women's boots were often red and white. This pair of red *kamiit* were made for a wedding anniversary in 1955.

Purnu, Sweden, 1967
Although coastal Sami relied on marine life for their livelihoods, reindeer skin was preferred over seal and fish skin when making clothing and footwear. This pair of reindeer-skin boots was worn by Karesuando Sami, and was made from dehaired reindeer skin dyed with alder bark to increase water resistance.

Orlofka, Eastern Siberia, Russia, 1960s
Historically, trade networks provided the Even, Evenki, and Koryak peoples with access to colourful beads, which they have used to skillfully decorate their clothing and footwear for centuries. This intricately beaded and frilled waterproof reindeer-skin boot was created in the 1960s.

RON WOOD/2016 BATA SHOE MUSEUM, TORONTO

A illustration of the Windsor Hockey Heritage Centre in Nova Scotia.

Net gain

Hockey museum receives cash infusion.

The "birthplace of hockey" is getting a $3-million infusion to celebrate Canada's game.

The Nova Scotia government pledged the funding recently to help construct a new hockey-themed museum in Windsor, Nova Scotia, where some historians of the sport claim the game originated.

The Windsor Hockey Heritage Centre will include an ice rink, indoor track, playing fields, and museum.

The origins of hockey are steeped in contention. Windsor's claim is based on a report by author Thomas Chandler Haliburton, who wrote of Nova Scotian boys playing "hurly" on frozen ponds as early as 1800. However, the first officially recorded hockey match took place in Montreal in 1875.

MOMENT

Battle of Seven Oaks

On June 19, 1816, gunshots rang out in the Red River territory, the bloody climax of an escalating and bitter rivalry between two major fur-trading companies. On that day two hundred years ago, a host of mounted North West Company men led by Métis leader Cuthbert Grant encountered a smaller armed group from the Hudson's Bay Company in what is now West Kildonan, a suburb of Winnipeg.

By the time the last gunshots were fired, twenty-one HBC men were dead, as well as one Métis Nor'Wester. Among those killed was Robert Semple, the recently appointed governor of the HBC territory. The deadly skirmish was a key factor in the two companies' eventual merger in 1821; both companies realized that bloodshed solved nothing and hurt their bottom lines.

The Fight At Seven Oaks, 1816, by Charles William Jefferys. The deadly clash was originally labelled a massacre, with blame largely being assigned to the Métis Nor'Westers. However, the event remains controversial, with some historians suggesting the Nor'Westers were provoked to fight. The Métis who fought for the North West Company called it "la Victoire de la Grenouillière" (the Victory of Frog Plain).

In 2015, a multi-stakeholder group in Manitoba announced a $350,000 plan to revitalize a 125-year-old monument commemorating the "Battle of Seven Oaks." The refurbished site will feature new interpretive panels telling the story of the conflict from the perspectives of all the combatants. The original monument was dedicated to the memory of Governor Semple and the HBC men killed in the battle.

TOP: HARVEY ARCHITECTURE
BOTTOM RIGHT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

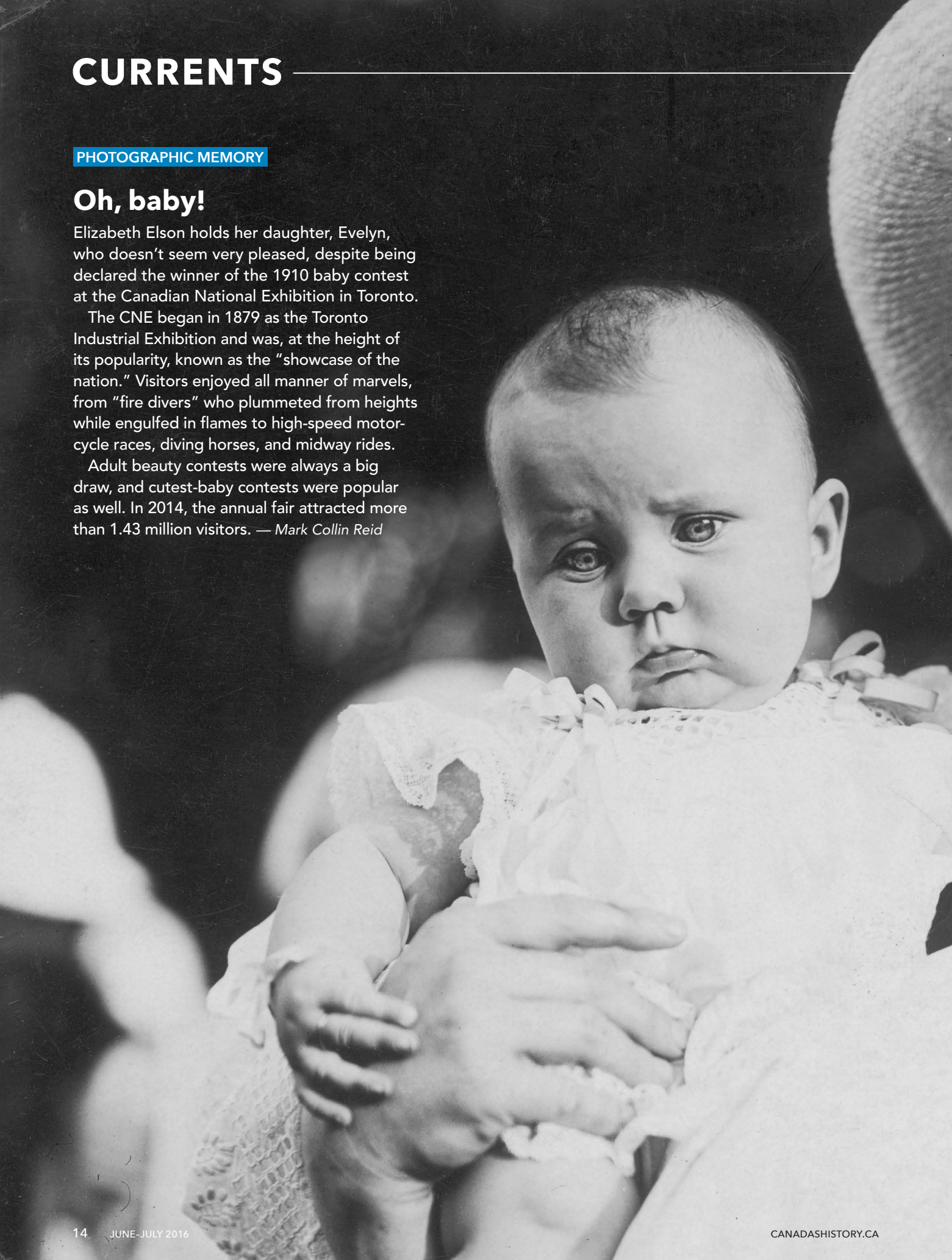
PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

Oh, baby!

Elizabeth Elson holds her daughter, Evelyn, who doesn't seem very pleased, despite being declared the winner of the 1910 baby contest at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto.

The CNE began in 1879 as the Toronto Industrial Exhibition and was, at the height of its popularity, known as the "showcase of the nation." Visitors enjoyed all manner of marvels, from "fire divers" who plummeted from heights while engulfed in flames to high-speed motorcycle races, diving horses, and midway rides.

Adult beauty contests were always a big draw, and cutest-baby contests were popular as well. In 2014, the annual fair attracted more than 1.43 million visitors. — *Mark Collin Reid*



CITY OF TORONTO ARCHIVES

LAW & ORDER

Breaking the law

From margarine madness to sasquatch silliness – a historic look at Canada's peculiar penal code.

by Danelle Cloutier

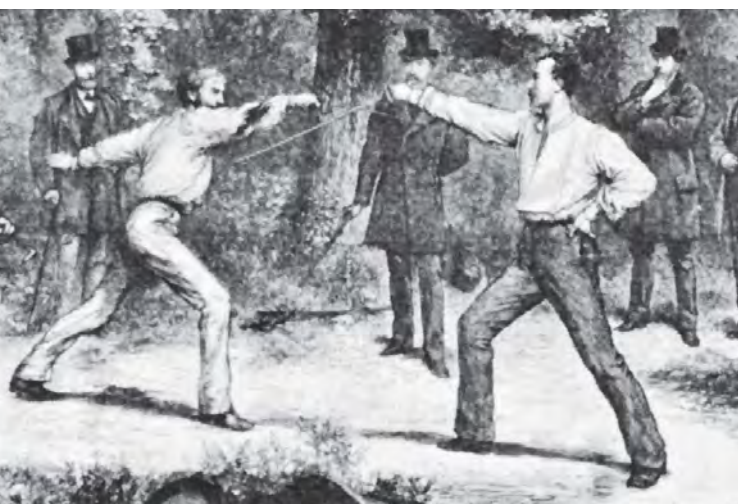
Did you know that, at one point in Canada's past, munching on margarine could get you tossed in the clink? It's just one of many odd laws that have perplexed Canadians over the years.

Skating on thin legal ice

"Toronto the Good" lived up to its no-fun reputation by banning snowy shenanigans on Sundays from 1912 to 1961. For instance, it was illegal to toboggan in Toronto's High Park on the Sabbath. Police officers were reportedly posted on snow hills to enforce the ban. City officials believed restricting entertainment, business, and other activities would encourage churchgoing. The tobogganing ban evoked a public outcry, but many Torontonians simply switched to skating.

Drinking? Gulp!

The end of Prohibition didn't mean an end to head-shaker rules regarding hooch. In some provinces, men and women were not allowed to drink together in beer parlours. From 1928 to 1957, bars in Manitoba were required to offer separate rooms based on gender, with no communication allowed between the patrons. As well, women were banned from serving booze in the province until 1975.



No duelling allowed

Make sure you don't quote "I challenge you to a duel" from *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* to any authorities, or you might get arrested. Duelling is defined as armed combat between two people in front of a witness who will settle the conflict. The first recorded duel in Canada took place in 1646 between two men who fought with swords to settle a spat. It's believed the last official duel in Canada took place in the mid-1800s. Today it is against the law to challenge someone to a duel, or to accept such an invitation.

Margarine madness? You butter believe it.

Beginning in 1886, the Canadian government banned margarine in order to protect the butter industry from competition. The ban was lifted briefly from 1917 to 1923, due to dairy shortages related to the First World War, but then reinstated. In 1950, the regulation of margarine fell under provincial jurisdiction, and laws varied around the country. Some provinces required margarine to be bright yellow to distinguish it from butter. Other provinces mandated that it be white. In 2008, Quebec became the last province to drop its colour law.

Be kind to Bigfoot

This one might be a myth, but legend has it that it was illegal in British Columbia to kill a sasquatch. A report from Nanaimo in the late 1800s says a man's request to shoot a "wild man of Home Lake" was denied because it was unlawful to shoot "mowglis" (an early name for the sasquatch).

NEWS

One country, many stories

History museum unveils designs for new Canadian History Hall

Innovative, inclusive, and complex. These are just some of the words that describe the upcoming revamp to the Canadian Museum of History's Canadian History Hall.

Slated to open on July 1, 2017 — the 150th anniversary of Confederation — the exhibit will include multiple and diverse perspectives on our shared past.

Architect Douglas Cardinal, who designed the Gatineau, Quebec, museum, is also leading the redesign of Canadian History Hall. The 40,000-square-foot exhibit will consist of three new galleries, arranged chronologically:

- "Early Canada, from earliest times to the British Conquest in 1763" will examine the lives of Aboriginal peoples both prior to and after the arrival of the first European explorers and settlers, as they sought to maintain traditional ways amid the upheaval of new social and political realities;
- "Colonial Canada, 1763 to 1914" will explore the challenges faced by Canadians as they sought self-government and independence from Britain, culminating in Confederation in 1867 and the growth of the new Dominion;
- "Modern Canada, 1914 to the Present" will reflect on the myriad paths travelled by Canadians as they worked together to build today's modern multicultural nation.

Top: An artist's illustration of the Modern Canada gallery. Above: A new mezzanine was inspired by the "Great Kettle" (Chaudière Falls) on the adjacent Ottawa River, a place revered by local Aboriginal peoples.

The new exhibit will feature more than 1,800 artifacts, and will include many technology-driven interactive elements.

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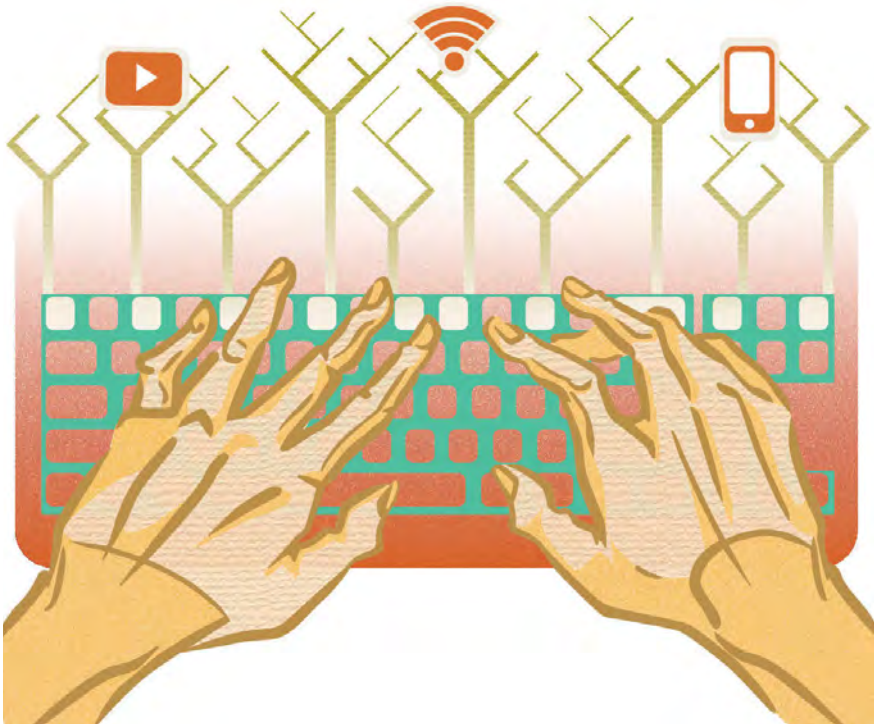


Family (history) counselling

Take an eclectic approach to learning. *by Paul Jones*

In my days as a newbie genealogist more than twenty-five years ago, I'd just show up on a Saturday morning at a Family History Centre run by the LDS Church and ask for help. Invariably, the volunteers were more than happy to share their expertise. The same was true at libraries, archives, and other institutions across the continent.

Since then there has been an explosion of educational and training resources available to family historians, including in print (books, periodicals, tipsheets); online (tutorials, webinars, YouTube videos, blogs, wikis); from institutions (academic programs, continuing education, distance learning); and via societies and suppliers (workshops, seminars, conferences, and cruises).

No one person could possibly keep up with everything that's on offer. If confused, simply Google the needed training, e.g."introduction to genealogy Alberta."

As someone who has programmed genealogical conferences and workshops, I can say with some confidence that the lecture most likely to elicit a large attendance would be one along the lines of: "How to find eight new ancestors in the next five minutes." Genealogists are oriented towards results and tend to dismiss the "fluff."

That's too bad. My most memorable lessons illuminated principles and processes. I'll never forget the late Ryan Taylor poring over a problematic census document involving an ancestor of mine. The respected Canadian genealogist's finger moved down the page, then hovered over a line I'd barely glanced at. "Yes, I think he's probably the key. Always check the neighbours," he said with a wry smile.

"Always check the neighbours" turns out to be a special case of a broader principle: Extract every item of usable data from your documents. You'd think this approach would appeal to results-oriented, value-conscious family historians. Yet many of us are in such a hurry to confirm our hypotheses that we see only what we're looking for.

Another lesson from my days as a genealogy student: Dr. Penelope Christensen's methodology courses for the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, based in Ajax, Ontario. It was there that I learned of the three linkages that must always be proved in every family tree: parent to parent, parent to child, and child to adult.

Most genealogists understand the first two linkages because they typically yield important paperwork. But how many false pedigrees have been propagated because an adult was incorrectly linked with the records of a similarly named child?

So, my advice to fellow genealogists: The next time you attend a conference or a workshop, don't ignore the fluff. Genealogy is not only about the data. Analysis is equally — perhaps more — important.

Just two of the five elements of the Genealogical Proof Standard deal with sources; three involve the evaluation, interpretation, and analysis of findings.

Not all methodological instruction is flagged as such. Case histories can be a delightful way of absorbing a lesson while enjoying a good story. Yet these classes are usually among the least-attended at any genealogy gathering, on the specious grounds that one doesn't have any ancestors who lived in the time and place of the case history. That certainly used to be how I thought, too. Of course, what makes a case history great is its resonance with similar situations elsewhere and elsewhen.

In the end, go with the training that suits your learning style. But do take an eclectic view of how your learning objectives can best be met.

Eight ancestors in the next five minutes may sound like a good thing, but only if you don't spend the next twenty years researching someone else's family.

And, for non-genealogists, the appropriate response to a helpful family historian is not, "How do you do it?" Sherlock Holmes identified this syndrome back in 1887: "If I show you too much of my method of working, you will come to the conclusion that I am a very ordinary individual after all."

Instead try, "You are a god." That should do nicely.

Paul Jones, a former publisher, is a writer, a consultant, and an avid genealogical researcher and volunteer.

ILLUSTRATION: ELIS WAUTIER

The caribou monument is unveiled at Beaumont-Hamel in France on June 7, 1925.

THE ROOMS

BATTLE SCARS

The terrible losses at the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel still resonate deeply within Newfoundland and Labrador's collective memory.

by Rex Murphy

The most noted and never exhausted irony that attends any commemoration of the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel concerns the day the commemoration falls: July 1. July 1 is, of course, Canada Day, the national birthday, the midsummer celebration of all we share and admire about our country. That Canada's birthday should perfectly intersect with remembrance services for one of the very bleakest moments in Newfoundland history gives a startling, even mordant, turn to the holiday.

I sometimes think, too, that in some elusive sense the deep contrast between the motives of the two events actually supplies additional emotional depth and meaning to both anniversaries. The birthday and the commemoration meet in the common focus of patriotism. In Newfoundland particularly, the shades of grief that always colour the recall of the terrible First World War losses in Beaumont-Hamel, France, are placed in something of a comforting balance, when on July 1 we note and mark our pleasure in being part of the larger nation. It is a comfort, too, that Canadians who are not Newfoundlanders have for many years now not only been aware of the duality of July 1 as it is marked in Newfoundland but frequently in the provincial and national capitals make reference to, or specifically acknowledge, the mixed and melancholy nature of this anniversary for Newfoundlanders.

Top: Explosives near the German front lines are set off by the Allies ten minutes before the assault at Beaumont-Hamel. The timing turned out to be a mistake. The blast signalled that a ground attack was imminent and gave the Germans time to strengthen their defences and ready their machine guns.

Right: Sable Chief, mascot of the Newfoundland Regiment, with his handler, Private Hazen Fraser, in England in 1917. The dog could reputedly march in step.

Certain events exert an emotional field long beyond their happening, carry a force that extends and amplifies the immediate and shattering emotional reach of their actual occurrence. Memory, especially the social memory that builds over time around great upheavals or loss, is dynamic. Over generations, recall surrounds a core of facts with varying themes; the urge to recall and the manner of memorialization responds to varying moods and imperatives.

Every anniversary, from the very earliest to this, the hundredth, properly dwells on the cruel facts of that morning on July 1, 1916 — the Newfoundland Regiment's dutiful rush out of the trenches and the near-total obliteration of the whole regiment in the less than thirty minutes that followed. The facts are powerful, but they do not reach the full piercing reality of that day's bleak business, the concentrated fury of the slaughter, its dreadful pointlessness, the speed of the oblivion visited on so many Newfoundlanders, or any real sense of how it must have felt to each individual young man as he answered the order to join the battle.

How lonely for some it must have been, how atrocious the scenes some saw before they fell, what thoughts crowded those young minds before all thought was stopped. What powered the dutifulness of these innocent soldiers who, mere months before, had left the familiar and unremarkable routines of life — laying traplines, hauling lobster pots, jigging cod — to find themselves about to wander into a perfect storm of horror and death? We can never really understand that day from the perspective of the minds of those who endured it.

We are generations removed from the agencies and psychology of that time. Current mores do not accommodate, or have ceased to connect with, the impulses of sheer duty, the stores of reckless

TOP: IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM. BOTTOM: THE ROOMS

No. 6 Platoon, Section 6, of the Newfoundland Regiment in 1915. Their knitted toques were later replaced by regimental caps with the distinctive caribou cap badge.

or stoic bravery when under command, which were the hallmarks of the young Newfoundland soldiers just a few years past the grim turning of the last century. Some gifted historians, perhaps some writers, may be able to throw themselves into the feel and current of a century ago, but for most the past is, in this sense, a genuinely foreign country. The thoughts and motivations of distant eras follow patterns that are no longer ours and can thereby be but imperfectly perceived. Every anniversary year is a kind of summons to attempt an understanding that no amount of anniversaries will ever answer completely.

There is an element, however, that does connect us with that day and that, at least to my understanding, partially accounts for the overwhelming resonance Beaumont-Hamel continues to hold in Newfoundlanders' hearts. It chimes with a long-standing theme of Newfoundland life as a two-sided mirror, one side bright and one side dark.

THE BLUE PUTTEES

Due to a shortage of khaki fabric in Newfoundland, the first five hundred volunteers of the Newfoundland Regiment wore non-standard blue woolen leg gear. Thus they became known as the Blue Puttees.

The Blue Puttees were the first to answer the call to serve abroad for a time "not exceeding one year." It was widely believed that the First World War would last only a few months.

By the time the war ended four years later, 6,241 men from Newfoundland had served in the regiment.

THOUGHTS BEFORE THE BATTLE

"Everyone seems so cool about it all, quietly preparing for what is going to be the greatest attack in the history of the world, and very possibly the greatest there will ever be. We only hope that it may be a very strong factor in bringing an early end to the war."
– Diary entry by Lieutenant Owen Steele of the Newfoundland Regiment on June 23, 1916, on the eve of Beaumont-Hamel. Steele survived the July 1 battle but was killed a week later by a German shell.

The lift of Newfoundland's way, the cheerfulness, humour, buoyancy, hospitality of this place, is a hallmark. Some of our most familiar folk songs carry that lift and are in effect a lyric signature of Newfoundland life. The delirious, delightfully absurd camaraderie of "The Kelligrews Soiree" captures it — "You may talk of Clara Nolan's Ball or anything you choose,/ But it couldn't hold a snuffbox to the spree at Kelligrews." And the song "We'll Rant and We'll Roar Like True Newfoundlanders," with its vivacity and delightful boisterousness, could be our real anthem. There's a flair for life and a fever for fun — regardless of what time, history, nature, or circumstance throw up as obstacles.

This lift and flair is the obverse of another dimension, one found equally in the storehouse of song and culture. For every "Rant and Roar" there is a "Hard, Hard Times." The last part of that bleak dirge is no soiree: " Hauled up on the hill, put down in the cold,/ And when it's all over you're still in the hole,/ And it's hard, hard times."

Those who chose to live here had it hardscrabble from the beginning. For much of its history the island was an afterthought. In its early days it was a convenience for England's merchants and navy; only gradually and reluctantly was it admitted to independent status under a responsible government (but relapsing twice into colonial rank). A scattered, under-served, and isolated population was yoked to a way of life that fixed the limits of most of its settlers to just getting by. A cruel climate and the treacherous/benevolent sea were their eternal partners. Newfoundland offered the bare essentials. What spare comforts and entertainments were to be found came from the exertions of craft, cunning, and sheer blind perseverance.

The mischiefs and hardships of port life were many and relentless. That life bred a spirit of communal support as well as what is only superficially its opposite — stern self-reliance. Newfoundlanders were very individualistic — they did not like to lean on others. But they also saw their fellows as in a reflecting glass — in all the essentials they were as themselves. So, in truly hard times they looked to their neighbours' well-being, or to their neighbours' family if the father had been lost at sea. They saw in such moments an image of their own circumstance. Nothing prompts one person to help another more than the clear appreciation that what befalls one can, with but the slightest shift of time or chance, just as easily befall another. In this particular sense, out-

The Sinking of the Titanic as illustrated in the 1981 issue of *Look and Learn*.

TOP: THE ROOMS; BOTTOM: BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

port culture read in the fate of one the fate of all.

People all moved in the same limited sphere, all were exposed to the fist of precarious forces and thereby, in some deep and mainly tacit sense, were bonded to one another. They were stirred by similar patterns of emotions, and never more so than when accidents of nature — storms at sea, failures of the fishery, sickness, epidemics — struck hard on a family, a settlement, or, in the worst instance, roiled the whole outport world.

Men and women worked, lived, built families, and died within a frame of unalterable, irresistible, and sometimes cruelly unpredictable forces. A hard land, a wild sea, storm and calm, a people scattered on the edge of coastlines in hundreds of self-contained sea-bounded villages — this was the Newfoundland universe for generations. The great events of the world outside hardly touched them.

But that greater world will intervene even in the lives of those who are usually most distant from it. Sometimes the collision with the outside world will just be the happenstance of geography. When the mighty *Titanic* went down on April 10, 1912, its first distress signals went to the far eastern lighthouse at Cape Race, Newfoundland, some 150 kilometres down the southern shore from St. John's. The news of alarm was sent via the new Marconi wireless technology, inaugurated just years before at Signal Hill in St. John's. From Cape Race, word of the *Titanic*'s fate was forwarded to the Newfoundland telegraph installation at Heart's Content, which relayed the news to the wider world.

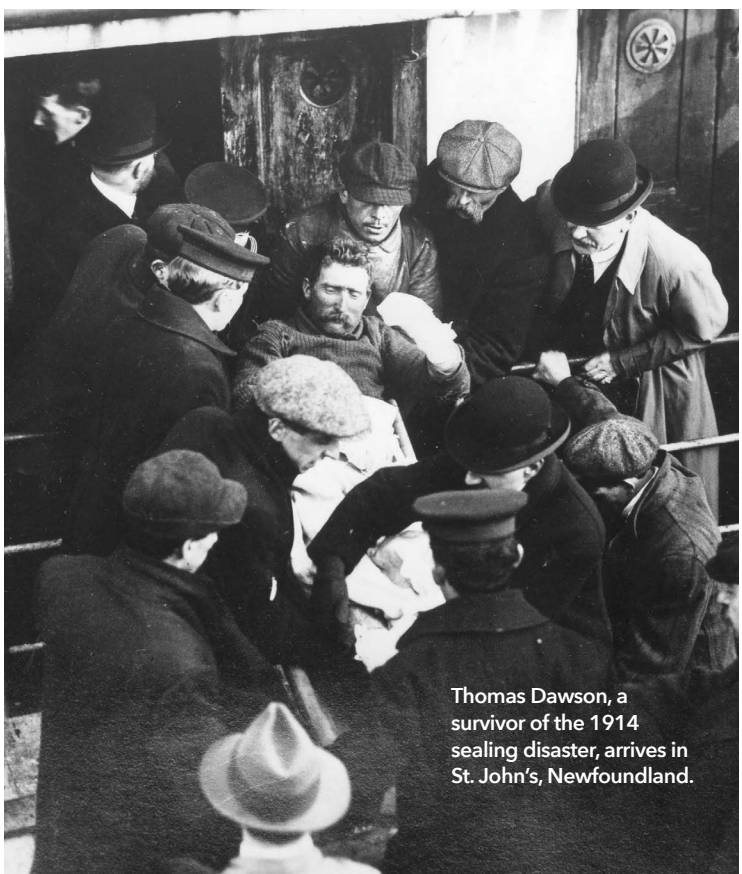
Calamity, or the shadow of calamity, will always find some link to Newfoundland. Those who have any familiarity with the long, sad course of the heroic seal hunt are aware that its history was scarred, with fearsome frequency, by appalling sufferings and catastrophe. Indeed, it was on the very eve of the First World War — the spring of 1914 — that two of the worst sealing disasters took place. Seventy-eight men from the SS *Newfoundland* were caught away from their ship in a savage storm on the northeast coast. They all died a gruesome death in the water or were frozen on the ice floes of the North Atlantic. At around the same time, another ship, the SS *Southern Cross*, sank while returning from the southern sealing front on the Gulf of St. Lawrence. All 173 men on board were lost. The twin disasters threw the whole island into mourning. Yet an even darker moment was about to come.

The keening was never sharper than after the morning, one hun-

TOP: ISTOCK. BOTTOM: ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT MUSEUM

BEFORE FRANCE

The Newfoundland Regiment was first ordered to Gallipoli, Turkey, in the fall and winter of 1915-16. On the way there, its members spent time in Egypt, acclimatizing to the hot weather. The Gallipoli campaign reduced the regiment to seventeen officers and 470 other ranks. Forty-four died and hundreds more were wounded.



Thomas Dawson, a survivor of the 1914 sealing disaster, arrives in St. John's, Newfoundland.

THE DANGER TREE

As the Newfoundland Regiment advanced toward the enemy at Beaumont-Hamel, there was an apple tree halfway down the slope that marked the spot where German fire seemed to become particularly intense. This gnarled tree was nicknamed the "danger tree" by the Newfoundland troops and marked the spot where many fell that morning. The petrified tree remains as a monument to the fallen at Beaumont-Hamel.

A wounded man is brought in at the Battle of the Somme – the overall campaign of which the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel was a part – in 1916.

dred years ago, when the 801 members of the Newfoundland Regiment left their trenches and went "over the top" toward the German lines at Beaumont-Hamel. So many, and so young, they went to death or maiming. Of those 801, only 68 were present for roll call the next day. The rest were dead, wounded, or missing. Beaumont-Hamel was, to summon a biblical name, Aceldama, the field of blood.

If Newfoundland, in terms of population, is a small place now, it was an even smaller place then. The young men of Beaumont-Hamel had come from every corner of the country (as then it was). Few communities did not bear the cross of losing a favourite they were never to see again.

VICTORIA CROSS WINNER

In the final days of the war, seventeen-year-old Tommy Ricketts of the Newfoundland Regiment became the youngest soldier of the war to win the Victoria Cross, the highest award for valour. He won it for doubling back under heavy machine-gun fire to get more ammunition, then manning a Lewis gun and, with exceptionally good aim, clearing an enemy battery. He survived the war and became a pharmacist in St. John's, Newfoundland.

They had gone with that mix of motives with which young men have always gone to war. Adventure beckoned some; escape from the too-familiar others; honest fealty to "King and country," which probably seems a little outré today, likely spoke in some measure to all.

But it surely ripped the heart of all of Newfoundland that in the very first minutes of the great Battle of the Somme, on a perfect summer day, nearly all of her sons in that regiment were dead or mangled. The Newfoundland Regiment fell under a brutal hammer stroke of concentrated machine-gun fire, mortar, and sniping. They were, for that time, alone on the field. The Essex Regiment, which was to have simultaneously advanced, in the confusions of that morning had not. The Newfoundland Regiment rose alone from the trenches and walked, stumbled, rushed into death.

It was the most brutal day in Newfoundland history. The scale of it was beyond absorption. It could have left no one untouched. The suddenness and totality of all that loss had to be unbearable. The apparent pointlessness of the effort had to add a knife edge to already nerve-stinging sorrow. And added to all that immediate effect was the other dimension that attends every Newfoundland tragedy: that it "fitted" with, that it was the most intense realization ever, of the tragic strand in Newfoundland consciousness.

Perhaps it is a romantic overlay, but to my mind the real music of Newfoundland life always moves in a minor key. There is a reflex in the Newfoundland consciousness that always we must pay a return for all that is light and open here — that the mix of beauty and vitality that marks the ways of this place, and which we so much regard and even love, is not to be unattended with shadow and grief.

Nothing so fixed as fate is at play or work, but something a near

THE ROOMS

Relatives of victims of the 1982 *Ocean Ranger* disaster comfort each other at a memorial service in St. John's, Newfoundland.

BORIS SPREMO/TORONTO STAR

neighbour to it that winds a grey and sombre tinge around our abiding here. I saw, or felt, that mood after another more modern tragedy, that day in February 1982 and in the days that followed the wild storm that sank the *Ocean Ranger* and sent all eighty-seven of its offshore oil rig workers to their end.

Newfoundlanders at such moments feel or have an intuitive glimpse of a consideration that they live under a different sky than most, that their closeness to the elements, their daily intercourse with weather, wind and sea, places them at the disposition of forces as old as the island itself.

That feeling is, I admit, fanciful, certainly not one that easily accords with iPhones, selfies, news cycles running on gossip, and the fevers of day-to-day politics. Nonetheless, there is a gravity to the Newfoundland way of seeing things that places episodes like the *Ocean Ranger*, like the deaths of the sealers of the *Newfoundland* and the *Southern Cross*, and, capitally, the destruction of the Newfoundland Regiment in a continuum of accident and loss.

Of all the stories and anecdotes that came out of that July 1 day on the European battlefield, of all the memorials and ceremonies that have since marked it — from the "Royal" honorific added to the Regiment in 1917, to the reverently tended battlefield, the annual services, memoirs, and tributes — the most touching, at all this distance in time and place, for me comes from the words, frequently recalled, of one of the wounded survivors of that terrible morning. They were, "Is the Colonel pleased? Is the Colonel satisfied?"

There is a ferocious loyalty in those words. And a ferocious innocence as well. They are empty of every modern cynicism. I cannot articulate, I cannot place a name on what is so peculiarly Newfoundland about that pathos-laden inquiry, but I hear in its yearning for it to be confirmed that the men had done their duty, something inexpressibly sad and inexpressibly wonderful, too. It rings with a terrible selflessness that outpaces even bravery.

When Newfoundlanders recall Beaumont-Hamel, I believe they are reaching for some contact with a strand of their character that passing time and the modern ethos have submerged, but which remains latent and ever so prized.

// Learn more at CanadasHistory.ca/BeaumontHamel

LAUGHING AT DEATH

"No pen could describe what it is like, how calmly one stands and faces death, jokes and laughs; everything is just an everyday occurrence. You are mud covered, dry and caked, perhaps, but you look at the chap next [to] you and laugh at the state he is in; then you look down at your own clothes and then the other fellow laughs. Then a whizz bang comes across and misses both of you, and both laugh together."
– Private Francis Lind of the Newfoundland Regiment in a letter to the St. John's Daily News *dated June 29, 1916. Lind died two days later at Beaumont-Hamel.*

AN
UNKNOWN
COUNTRY
CANADA
2 DOLLARS

REFLECTING ON A CANADA WHERE SIZE MATTERS, MIRRORS ARE NOT TO BE TRUSTED, AND THINGS WORK – EVEN IF WE ARE NOT QUITE SURE HOW.

BY ROY MACGREGOR

Above: A vintage Canadian postcard, circa 1960, makes use of a variety of familiar images to promote Canada as wholesome and outdoorsy.

SOON WE SHALL ENTER THE LONG year of the anniversary. Come 2017, it will be 150 years since Confederation brought four British colonies — Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the United Canadas (present-day Ontario and Quebec) — together to form a country that would be known as Canada and would eventually consist of ten provinces and three territories. It will also be one hundred years since this young country found its spine in a distant battle near Vimy, France, and one hundred years since it lost the artist Tom Thomson, who took a landscape dismissed by Voltaire as "*quelques arpents de neige*" (a few acres of snow) and turned what he saw into the beauty that came to define the country's soul.

There will be far less note, if any at all, of another milestone, but it will be seventy-five years since Bruce Hutchison published *The Unknown Country*, a then-seminal look at this country that opens with the haunting lines, "No one knows my country, neither the stranger nor its own sons. My country has not found itself nor felt its power nor learned its true place. It is all visions and doubts and hopes and dreams. It is strength and weakness, despair and joy, and the wild confusions and restless strivings of a boy who has passed his boyhood but is not yet a man."

So very much has changed over those seventy-five years, and not just the development of a social reality and equality that would include daughters as well as sons. It could be argued that Canada has indeed found itself, but equally pointed out that, at least twice, it came close to losing itself forever. As for visions, doubts, hopes, and dreams, they are subject to change more frequently than the unpredictable weather.

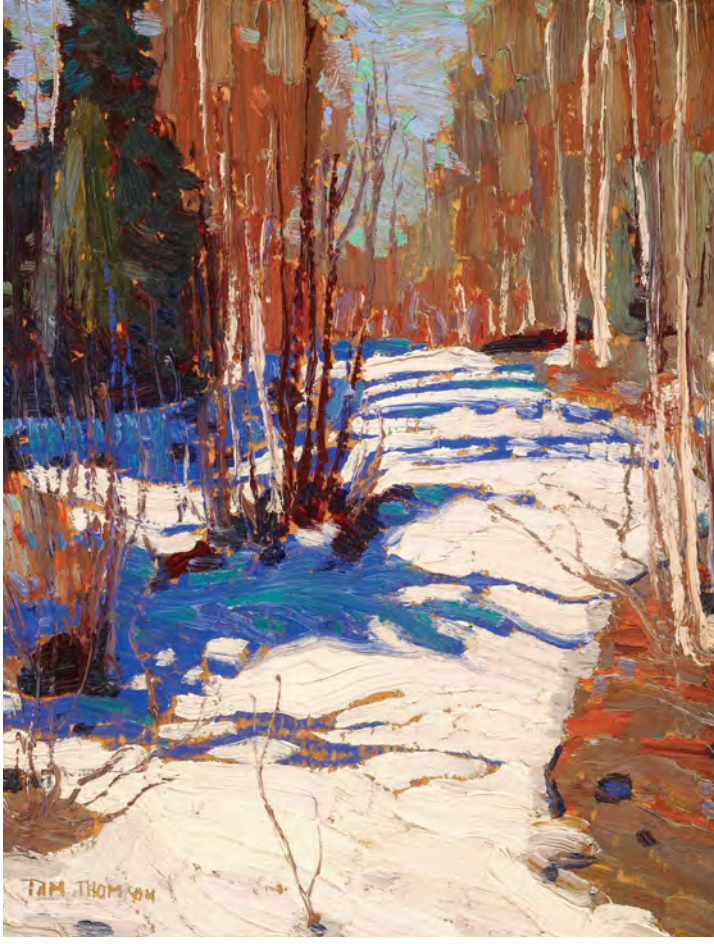
For Canada is a face that does not trust its own mirrors.

Sesquicentennial eve, if we may call 2016 that, opened with a surprise for Canadians, a people usually so reserved that British travel writer Jan Morris once called us "almost incoherently polite." Suddenly, it seemed, we were being noticed. In January, as the most powerful nations and personalities gathered in Davos, Switzerland, for the annual World Economic Forum, an international survey was released naming Canada as one of the very best countries in the world in which to live. Only Germany ranked ahead of this few (now) hectares of snow; Canada was a better place to call home, the survey concluded, than the United Kingdom or the United States. This country was seen as a place that welcomes immigrants — at that moment processing thousands of Syrian refugees — and celebrates diversity. It has a high standard of living, has a national identity closely tied with its vast wilderness, and has produced a long list of accomplished artists.

This unexpected hurrah followed a study by the London-based Legatum Institute that declared Canada the "freest country in the world." Around the same time, the prestigious British publication *The Economist* released its list of the most-livable cities on the planet and included three Canadian centres — Vancouver,

SELLING CANADA/DANIEL FRANCIS PRIVATE COLLECTION

IT IS ALL VISIONS AND DOUBTS AND HOPES AND DREAMS. IT IS STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS, DESPAIR AND JOY.



Above: *North Shore, Lake Superior*, by Lawren S. Harris, circa 1926. The image of a strongly lit, solitary tree, blasted smooth by the forces of nature, was meant to convey the underlying spirit found in the northern Canadian landscape. Right: *Path Behind Mowat Lodge* by Tom Thomson, circa 1917. The Group of Seven artist is said to have captured the soul of Canada in his landscape paintings.

Toronto, Calgary — in the top five. Those raising a toast to such accolades may have been pouring Crown Royal Northern Harvest, just declared "world whisky of the year." And then, to top it all off, the *New York Times* published a feature declaring Canada had somehow suddenly become "hip." The newspaper stated, "the notion that our neighbor to the north is a frozen cultural wasteland populated with hopelessly unstylish citizens is quickly becoming so outdated as to be almost offensive."

Canadians had seen this play before. A decade earlier, *The Economist* had placed a moose in sunglasses on its cover and declared Canada "cool" — in ways apart from weather. The moose, it turned out, had no legs. "Cool" didn't even last a season. Why would this be any different?

Canada, the January *Times* article cooed, now had a handsome new and young prime minister in Justin Trudeau — recently featured with his wife, Sophie Gregoire-Trudeau, in a Hollywood-style spread in *Vogue* magazine — and the Trudeaus and their three beautiful children were creating a Canadian Camelot in Ottawa. Not only was the PM and his family "hip," but the *Times* provided a long list of Canadians worthy of American and world admiration: director Sarah Polley, fashion designer Tanya Taylor, singers The Weeknd, Drake, and Justin Bieber, comedians Mike Myers, Martin Short, and Andrea Martin, actor Ryan Gosling, and several others, including eighty-one-year-old "coolest cat" Leonard Cohen.

"It's all very exciting, eh?" the newspaper continued, unable to resist a little parodying Canada-speak. "But still … Canada? The land of hyper-politeness and constant apology? The home of maple syrup, poutine, the gentle sport of curling, and ten percent of the world's forests? The country that *Spy* magazine once said had 'cultural Epstein-Barrness'?"

As for "hip," its shelf life would turn out to be roughly equal to the newspaper that carried the story. How, Canadians asked, could a survey released at the World Economic Forum ignore the reality of Canada's collapsing resource industries, its plummeting stock markets, and its drowning loonie? Not to mention the ridiculous house prices in Toronto and Vancouver, the soaring price of cauliflower, the country's sad record on relations with its indigenous population, and, of course, the bitterly cold weather.

It all struck Anthony Wilson-Smith, the head of Historica Canada, as just a little much. "How Canadian," Wilson-Smith tweeted, "that when others (#NYT) say how great we are, we indignantly rush to explain why that's wrong." Indeed, barely a week had passed in the celebration that "Canada is back," and the strings of this cat's cradle we call Confederation were pulling away from each other — a cross-country oil pipeline proposal with Quebec mayors up in arms and rumbles out of Alberta in favour, once again, of Western separation.

None of this really surprises Canadians. We are, after all, a country of contradictions. Our new year begins the Monday after Labour Day. Groundhog Day is closer to the official start of winter than to the end. The newly named "Western University" is in the East. We whine about the cold, and yet, in places like White River, Ontario, and Snag, Yukon Territory, we hope to bring in tourists by boasting of record lows. We drive from thick forest, to flat prai-

RIGHT: *CANADA: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY*. LEFT: TOMTHOMSONCATALOGUE.ORG.

THE SEARCH FOR THE CANADIAN IDENTITY HAS GONE ON FOR AS LONG AS THERE HAS BEEN A CANADA.

Left: A Canadian Pacific Railway poster from about 1920 encourages newcomers to the West who are willing to work hard.
Right: Workers clear the track after a prairie snowstorm, circa 1947.

rie, to mountains. We have three ocean shores, each profoundly different, and a fourth shore, freshwater, along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes system, where, for long stretches at a time, we stare across to the United States at night as if that country is all lighted store windows on the far side of a street that is mostly a dark and vacant lot on the other side. And yet we consider our vacant lot the superior, and more valuable, property.

The current "dean of the House of Commons," the longest-sitting Member of Parliament, is Louis Plamondon, first elected in 1984 and a founding father of the Bloc Québécois, a party dedicated to the breakup of the very country he has now served longer than any other elected federal official. A few years back, a Haitian-born woman, Michaëlle Jean, gave up her dual citizenship with France so she could become Governor General of Canada and represent the Queen of England. More than 130 years after he was hanged as a traitor, Louis Riel is thought by some politicians to deserve a statue on Parliament Hill as a Father of Confederation. Where contradictions are lacking, confusion reigns.

Canadians have two languages, but few speak them both; they have two national sports but hardly ever play one, lacrosse. When Canadians say the word "Ottawa," it is sometimes hard to say whether they are referring to the national capital or swearing.

Our geographic and transportation lines run east and west, our economic lines north and south. In hockey games that begin with the singing of the national anthem in both official languages, more people in the crowd will sing along to "The Hockey Song" by Stompin' Tom Connors. We overreact when we are overlooked — remember American President George W. Bush's "thank you" speech to Congress after 9/11, where he named all the U.S. allies but the closest one? And we overreact when we are noticed — remember the outrage when the Atlanta Marine Corps Color Guard carried the Maple Leaf flag upside down to open game two of the 1994 baseball World Series, which the Toronto Blue Jays would go on to win? When an American cartoon show included a song called "Blame Canada," our first reaction, being Canadian, was to apologize, of course; but when we thought about it we felt we'd been insulted unfairly. We are speaking here, remember, of a *cartoon* show (*South Park*).

The search for the Canadian identity has gone on for as long as there has been a Canada. Hutchison could not define it when he wrote *The Unknown Country*, nor could respected American journalist Andrew Malcolm in 1985, when the *New York Times'* Canadian correspondent published *The Canadians*. After four years in this country, Malcolm began to think "that for many Canadians perhaps their unfortunate identity was to search forever for an identity, a Sisyphean task guaranteed to ensure eternal angst. The search itself had become the identity…."

William Lyon Mackenzie King, the tenth prime minister of Canada, once said this country has "too much geography and not enough history." It still does — but perhaps it is the sheer magnitude of the country and the breadth of climate that — more than anything else, including language and origin — make us who we are.

Back in the summer of 2003, when the *Globe and Mail* was running a series on multiculturalism tagged "New Canada," the newspaper commissioned a poll to ask citizens what, to their

LEFT: CPR ARCHIVES. RIGHT: WILLIAM HANSON BOORNE/MCCORD MUSEUM

1.9 MILLION SQUARE KILOMETRES OF UNCHARTED TERRITORY. IT'S JUST TOO DAMNED BIG TO GRASP FULLY.

Clockwise from upper left: "A Girl From Canada" takes part in a parade in Exeter, England, in 1907 to promote immigration to Canada's West. Lumberjacks at work in British Columbia, circa 1890. An early twentieth-century immigration poster promotes a healthy life in Canada. A Mountie and a First Nations man in Bow Valley, Alberta, in the 1930s. A portrait of Otokuyicokoan, a Sarcee man in Alberta, circa 1887.

minds, best symbolized their country. While the hope might have been "multiculturalism," such concepts as "medicare," "hockey," "moose," "snow," and "Tim Horton's" were obvious possibilities. But no, in a country where two out of every three Canadians live in what most of us would call "cities" – avoiding the unfortunate Statistics Canada definition of "urban" as any place with one thousand or more people — it turned out that eighty-nine per cent of those surveyed chose the sheer "vastness of the land."

Here, size matters.

A personal conceit is travel, most of it thanks to the expense accounts of journalism. For more than forty years I have been privileged to travel this country in search of stories. I've seen the sun rise at Cape Spear, Newfoundland and Labrador, and set at Tofino, British Columbia; I've swum in salt water in the Atlantic and Pacific as well as in Saskatchewan (Lake Manitou); I've been to Alert, Nunavut, and I've stood at the very edge of Ellesmere Island knowing there is nothing but ice and the curve of the horizon between this country and Russia. I have travelled millions of kilometres by jet plane, helicopter, bush plane, military transport, rental car, bus, ferry, bicycle, motorboat, canoe, kayak, foot, and thumb.

And yet, the more the travel the more the realization that one can see but a small fraction of this incredibly vast land in a lifetime. This must have been what explorer David Thompson felt after spending his life mapping more than 1.9 million square kilometres of uncharted territory. It's just too damned big to grasp fully.

Such continuous travel has taken me past the giant paperclip at Kipling, Saskatchewan, the giant hockey stick in Duncan, British Columbia, the giant goose at Wawa, Ontario, and the giant lobster at Shediac, New Brunswick. There is great humour out there as well as great sadness. You can feel it as you stand by the statue that sits where Terry Fox stopped near Thunder Bay, Ontario. It is found at Grosse Île, Quebec, near the throat of the St. Lawrence, where 5,424 Irish lie in mass graves. Included in that shocking number are ten Mary Kellys, all of whom died during the summer and fall of 1847, when some one hundred thousand desperate Irish fled the potato famine and nearly four hundred ships put into the Grosse Île harbour to be quarantined until medical officials could declare their occupants free of typhus and able to continue on to Quebec City. The rest died and were buried on the island.

Those who carried on became Canadians, just as the First Nations, French, and British who preceded them were all Canadian. They would be joined over time by Germans and Italians, by eastern Europeans, northern Europeans, Ukrainians, Africans, Indians, Asians, by land-seekers and refugees from virtually every part of the world, including an influx of thousands of Syrians fleeing war and terrorism over the winter of 2015–16.

Over time, the touchstones of Canadiana become familiar, part of what sociologist John Porter long ago tagged the "vertical mosaic" of Canadian society, a culture decidedly different from the "melting pot" of America. Canada would be a country composed of those who kept their own identity and culture but also embraced their new reality of being Canadian. They would come to know the Canadian

CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER RIGHT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA. BAILEY AND NEELANDS/VANCOUVER ARCHIVES. GLENBOW ARCHIVES. CPR ARCHIVES. MICKEY POTOROKA/CPR ARCHIVES.

WE ARE NORTHERNERS AND WESTERNERS, QUEBECOIS AND PRAIRIE PEOPLE, MARITIMERS AND ISLANDERS.

Top left: Team Canada at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics. Top right: Sunrise at Cape Spear, Newfoundland and Labrador. Bottom left: The giant goose statue at Wawa, Ontario.

Shield, Peggy's Cove, Niagara Falls, the Rockies, prairie skies, and northern lights. They would learn what "nuisance grounds" meant.

Having left, in so many instances, communities that had but a single, powerful house of worship, many would end up in small Canadian communities with numerous different churches, the communal "service" transferring to the hockey rink and the curling club. They would know what Nanaimo bars are and why maple syrup goes with pancakes and apple pie.

They would understand, even if they did not like it, why the news in their country waits for the hockey game to be over during playoff time. They could laugh at place names like Medicine Hat, Alberta, and Dildo, Newfoundland, and Climax, Saskatchewan. They would celebrate the May "two-four" long weekend, once known as Victoria Day, and sing along with Celine Dion, Gordon Lightfoot, Nickelback, Neil Young, Anne Murray, Carly Rae Jepsen, and hundreds of other national stars. They would know the difference between Saskatoons and blueberries, watch *Corner Gas*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Trailer Park Boys*, and *Les Boys*. They would eat fiddleheads in springtime and poutine in winter. Some would drink screech and kiss a cod.

They would fight bugs and talk endlessly about the weather. They would learn, as Red Green demonstrated, that almost everything can be fixed with duct tape. They would learn to skate and ski and swim in northern lakes where, when you dry off, there is a tingling sensation unlike anything ever before experienced. They would love their national and provincial parks, perhaps take annual canoe trips, cheer for the Blue Jays, mourn the Expos, build outdoor rinks, rake leaves, reluctantly use an outhouse, take subways, hike, attend Carnaval in Quebec City and the Stampede in Calgary, and perhaps even find Timothy Eaton's statue in downtown Winnipeg and rub his bronzed toe for good luck.

All part of being Canadian.

Many years ago, Peter Gzowski asked his CBC Radio listeners if they could come up with a Canadian phrase the equal of "As American as apple pie." The winner, after long deliberation, was declared to be: "As Canadian as possible … under the circumstances."

Einstein's theory can be worked out on a blackboard. We have a thousand books, dozens of Royal Commissions, hundreds of learned papers, and millions of panel discussions and late-night bar conversations — yet none has ever satisfactorily worked out the equation that is Canada.

We are the bumblebee nation. It flies. It works. But we're not quite sure how.

In 1872, barely five years after Confederation, Sandford Fleming, who would later give the world time zones, led a grand expedition across the joined colonies and adjacent territories to see what had come out of all that big talk in Charlottetown and Quebec City. The Fleming expedition from Halifax to Victoria covered 2,714 kilometres by steamer, 3,516 kilometres by horse, nearly 1,600 kilometres by train, and 780 kilometres by canoe or rowboat. George M. Grant, the man assigned to keep a written record of the journey, described what he saw as "the great lone land." And it remains the great lone land, an incredible, awe-inspiring landscape that Grant

TOP LEFT: CANADIAN PRESS. TOP RIGHT: ZACH WHEELER/FLICKR. BOTTOM LEFT: PETER PELISEK/FLICKR.

AND IT REMAINS THE GREAT LONE LAND, AN INCREDIBLE, AWE-INSPIRING LANDSCAPE.

Clockwise, upper left: Duncan, British Columbia's giant hockey stick. The Quebec Winter Carnival's Bonhomme. Actor Megan Follows in the CBC television series *Anne of Green Gables*. Shediac, New Brunswick's giant lobster.

said "rolled out before us like a panorama, varied and magnificent enough to stir the dullest spirit into patriotic emotion."

Canadians have never been as jingoistic as Americans when it comes to displays of patriotism. Canadians, in fact, seem somewhat uncomfortable with it all, preferring to refer to themselves in regional terms when in their own country. We are Northerners and Westerners, Quebecois and Prairie people, Maritimers, Newfoundlanders, and Islanders. Only Ontario people primarily identify themselves as "Canadians" — but that may be because the human mouth has never quite been able to handle "Ontarian."

And yet it can be argued, even demonstrated, that the Canadian identity is only elusive at home. Beyond the borders, Canadians know exactly who they are; within the borders, they might see themselves as part of a family, a street, a neighbourhood, a community, a province, a region, and, only on special occasions such as Canada Day and Grey Cup weekend, a country called Canada. Within the borders, Canadians often whine about their country; beyond the borders, they pine for Canada. All part of the great contradiction.

Step outside the national borders, and we are all proud Canadians, happy that the rest of the world seems to "like" us even if they know precious little about who we are. Add in an Olympics — especially the Winter Games, where we tend to excel — and Canadian patriots can be every bit as jingoistic, enthusiastic, proud — and, at times, annoying — as Americans at their Stars-and-Stripes peak.

My first experience with the international strutting Canadian was in Nagano, Japan, at the 1998 Winter Games, where Canada's game, hockey, would for the first time include both the best professional players in the world and women hockey players. At Summer Games, which I had covered before, Canada knows its place, celebrating the small and even embracing the self-mocking "Go for bronze!"

Winter is quite another experience, where Canadians have either invented the events or have learned to excel in them: We expect to win. In Nagano, it seemed so incredibly un-Canadian, then, to see an attractive young woman turn up at a Big Hat arena men's hockey match with two very small, strategically placed Canadian flags over her breasts and a red maple leaf painted on her bare back. To surprised Japanese fans, this prancing, screaming Canadian fan was not the Anne of Green Gables of their Canada. Nor was it the Canada they thought they knew when curler Paul Savage dropped his pants in a media scrum to prove to photographers that he did indeed have the Olympic rings tattooed on his butt — a revelation that caused Canadian women's curler Joan McCusker to warn him that it was illegal to produce the rings without permission and that the International Olympic Committee might well "sue your ass off."

In the winter of 2006, Turin, Italy, played host to the XX Olympic Winter Games. Many of us in the Canadian media were housed in a village in the small town of Grugliasco, just outside of Turin, and the final Sunday of those games found many of us settling down to penne and wine in a local restaurant — Grugliasco — that had been greatly expanded with a heated tent. The big event of the day for Canada would be the closing ceremonies and the handing over of the Olympic flag to Vancouver, which would host the 2010 Games. As only a handful of Canadian reporters had been assigned to the event, the rest had little to do but drink wine, eat, and watch. Two

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CREOLENED.COM; CARNAVAL DE QUÉBEC; ALAMY; EDIBLEROADTRIP.COM

very large televisions were set up at each end of the tent. One carried the closing ceremonies. The other showed a football match, Turin versus Milan. The volume on each was roughly the same, though clearly the one being listened to was the soccer match.

The tent part of the restaurant was full. Mostly it was families and occasional groups of young men, all fervently watching this match against hated rival Milan. They cheered every Turin rush, groaning at every missed goal or turn of play in Milan's favour. The Canadians sat drinking and half-heartedly watching the silent closing ceremonies of a Winter Games many of them would be happy to forget.

WE TAKE ENORMOUS PRIDE, WITH GOOD REASON, IN OUR ACCEPTANCE AND TOLERANCE.

But then something happened.

On the screen that only a few were staring at, the officials were handing over the Olympic flag. The folded flag was passing from Italian hands to Canadian. The camera then switched over to the large figure of well-known opera singer Ben Heppner, who is one of those rare Canadians who actually does know all the words, in both official languages, to "O Canada."

Heppner's glorious tenor caused heads to swivel. Perhaps the Italians love a great voice as much as a great game; whatever, the crowd turned en masse to see where that glorious sound came from. The cheering and groaning for soccer ceased, and, instead, the tent went absolutely silent as all strained to listen to Ben Heppner sing a song in praise of a country six time zones and an ocean away.

As Heppner moved into the second verse in French, a man sitting on the far side of the restaurant stood up sharply, snapping to attention. Slim, bespectacled and grey-haired, it was Bertrand Raymond, long-time sports columnist of *Le Journal de Montreal*. "Bert," as he is called in the sports world, is a revered character, full of sharp, smart opinions, funny in his small talk and passionate in his writing.

Sport is far more political in Quebec than it is in the rest of the country. Many Quebeckers, and more than a few non-Quebeckers, believe that the "Quiet Revolution" of the 1960s and, ultimately, even the sovereignty movement grew out of a single act of defiance by the legendary Maurice "Rocket" Richard back in 1955, when the National Hockey League banned him from playing the remainder of the season and fans rioted inside and outside the Montreal Forum on St. Patrick's Day. Some of the fiercest indépendentistes are sports personalities.

Bert Raymond, however, stood firmly at attention, shoulder squared, and he stared across that tented room so intensely at a table occupied by anglophone sports reporters from Canada that it seemed he might light the tablecloth on fire. He stared until we squirmed. And then, awkwardly and somewhat embarrassed, I took to my feet. Others sheepishly followed until the entire table, along with Bert's mostly francophone table on the opposite side, were all at attention until Ben Heppner finally wound down to the final line that, mercifully, every single person in the country does know by heart: "... we stand on guard for theeeeeeeeee…."

Raymond, distinguished, still at attention, gave the thumbs-up to those standing across the room.

We signalled back.

And then, before any of the proud, if self-conscious, visitors from Canada could sit back down, something swept through the entire restaurant that took us completely by surprise: loud, prolonged applause and cheers from the Italians. I do not believe I have ever been so proud to be known as Canadian.

We are a good country, even a great country, but we need to avoid being a smug country. We are far from perfect. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and the continuing fallout from the ill-considered residential schools system demonstrate all too clearly how Canada has failed its original people. The January demonstrations in Kingston to disrupt the bicentennial birthday celebration of Sir John A. Macdonald, first prime minister of Canada, show that he was indeed a nation builder but not entirely the lovable, irascible imbiber of popular history. Macdonald was ruthless when it came to the treatment of First Nations and Chinese railworkers — a politician dedicated, in his own words, to preventing Canada from becoming a "mongrel race."

We take enormous pride, with good reason, in our acceptance and tolerance. Much of it came out of necessity. The French made allies of Aboriginal tribes because they needed their guidance to get anywhere and, often, their instructions on how to survive. The British let the French keep their language, church, and civil code — wisely so, as the French at that moment in history outnumbered the British coming to take formal claim on the territory they had taken during the Seven Years War. Different ethnic groups spread into the West during the settlement years and largely got along, because they had to. Let the Americans have their "frontier thesis" and praise of rugged individualism; in this country that can be frozen half the year, cooperation and collectivism is necessary for survival and progress. It is no accident that the concept of medicare came out of rural and small-town Saskatchewan.

This was a land mass and a climate that demanded sharing, that was only possible through tolerance and provision. If you look at all the myriad inventions Canada has given the world — the telephone, insulin, Pablum, green garbage bags, IMAX, five-pin bowling, kerosene, standard time, the snowmobile, the Canadarm, et cetara — it is conceivable that the greatest of all is an idea that came to J.D. Millar, an engineer with the Ontario Department of Transport back in 1930.

The line down the middle of the road.

It took a Canadian to realize that forces headed in opposing directions should have a little safe space between them, a little order that allows for flow and function — a compromise, if you will, that permits matter going in seemingly opposite directions to get along.

There are black holes in our history of tolerance, beginning, of course, with the treatment of those who were here first. We have

HIS MESSAGE WAS SIMPLE: "YOU ARE HOME — WELCOME HOME."

Clockwise from left: A Chinese immigrant woman and her children in Montreal, circa 1897. Immigrants arrive at Union Station in Toronto in 1910. A Syrian refugee family arrives at Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport in 2015.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: MCCORD MUSEUM, LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES; REUTERS

also been cruel to those who came later and expected a different reception. In 1914, the *Komagata Maru* sailed to Vancouver with 376 passengers from Punjab — 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus, all of them British subjects — and Canada sent 352 of them back to India. A quarter century later, the *St. Louis* came from the other direction, carrying 907 Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. Canada turned them away; 254 of the sanctuary seekers would perish in concentration camps.

There are blemishes, but then there are stories such as that which unfolded deep in Ontario's Ottawa Valley over the winter of 2015–16. With refugees fleeing strife and terrorism in Syria, Canada said it would take in twenty-five thousand by Christmas, a time commitment that proved impossible; the push continued into the new year. In the small valley towns of Eganville and Killaloe, local volunteers began preparing to accept two large families. They collected money to help with the transition and even found new homes for the Syrians. In Deep River, another small town in this isolated part of eastern Ontario, the tiny Ottawa Valley Islamic Centre offered to help with translation and even connected two Arabic-speaking Canadian families to help with the transition.

The Ottawa Valley, like so many regions of this sprawling country, has a long history of offering refuge to all sorts of humanity for all sorts of reasons. The Irish fleeing famine in the early 1800s found land and work in the valley — the little village of Douglas even has as its motto "Home of the Leprechauns." Kashubes and Poles came to the valley in the 1850s and 1860s, fleeing years of oppression by Russians and Prussians. In some places, they were unwelcome. At one point there was even a movement to kick them out of Canada, a leading religious leader of the day calling them "dirty, stupid, reeking of garlic, undesirable Continental Europeans."

But not in the Ottawa Valley. At the highest point of land, not far from the Bonnechere and Madawaska rivers, the Kashubes and Poles found land that reminded them of home, and there they built a village, Wilno, with a magnificent Catholic Church they dedicated to Our Lady of Czestochowa, Queen of Poland. When John Paul II became the first pope to visit Canada in 1984, he pronounced, "Canada has become a second homeland" to Poles and insisted on visiting Wilno. A hundred years later, new refugees arrived in the valley, only this time from the United States. They were draft dodgers fleeing the prospects of being sent to Vietnam and hippies chasing back-to-the-land dreams. Unwelcome in some parts, they were embraced by the valley and have contributed hugely to the arts and culture of the area.

Today there are marriages that involve the children of those who found refuge here in the 1960s and the great-great-great-grandchildren of those who came in the 1860s. Perhaps in a generation it will be Canadians of Syrian heritage marrying into these families.

When Prime Minister Justin Trudeau welcomed the very first planeload of Syrian refugees that landed in Toronto, his message was simple: "You are home — welcome home."

Welcome indeed, to the place we are enormously pleased — even if we don't always show it — to call the best "home" on earth.

The Painted Flag,
acrylic on canvas, 1988.

PICTURES OF PATRIOTISM

Charles Pachter's edgy perspective brings art and Canadian history together in unusual ways.

by Christopher Moore

Thanks to Charles Pachter, the Maple Leaf flag is more than just a symbol of Canada. It's a work of art. "My painted flags are among my most recognized images," says the Toronto artist known for his bold graphic works and ironic sense of patriotism. "I painted the first ones in 1980, and the rest is history. They hang in the Canadian Embassy in Washington, Canada House in London, and the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, as well as in collections in Switzerland, France, and the United States. Under the influence of wind and light, the flags become beautiful abstractions that are a delight to paint."

Pachter's home/studio/gallery in central Toronto is a sleek temple of sunlight and glass that he calls Moose Factory, and its walls are covered with his work. Images of redcoat soldiers and loyalist governors' wives hang alongside portraits of moose and Macdonald and Margaret Atwood. Pachter portrays hockey players, Newfoundland houses, and the Canadian butter tart. He put the Queen on a moose and called the image "Monarchs of the North." Surrounded by these images, we talked recently about the connection of art and history.

I had recently seen Pachter's War of 1812 series displayed at Fort York in Toronto and his First World War series at the Ontario legislature, and his flag images and moose paintings seemed to be everywhere. But where, I wanted to know, did this fusion of dramatic art and the classic themes of Canadian history come from?

When Pachter was a kid in Toronto during the Second World War, his Canadian-born Jewish parents moved to a predominantly Anglican neighbourhood in north Toronto. All around, the loyalist, royalist faith of old Toronto and old Ontario prevailed. He grew up surrounded by traditions that were bred deep into those known as the FOOFs — Fine Old Ontario Families — who still dominated his city and his country. That fascination with roots and loyalties stayed with him, even as he remained slightly outside it.

After several decades of plugging in to the art world norms of galleries and dealers' commissions — he had shows with five dealers over the years — Pachter eventually went out on his own. Following studies at the Sorbonne (French literature) in Paris, the University of Toronto (art history), and the Cranbrook Academy of Art (graphics and design) in Michigan, he launched himself as

CHARLES PACHTER

a popular and prolific artist in Toronto. Always entrepreneurial, he began representing himself, showing and marketing his own work. When Toronto art critics John Bentley Mays and Gary Michael Dault proved immune to his art, he created his own three-named mock critic — Don Rouge Humber — who would say glowing things about him in the ads he put in newspapers to promote his shows at Moose Factory.

Documentary realism has never seemed a driving force in his historical painting. Pachter's art has been intensely of our time: vivid colours, strong design, irreverent attitudes. But his subjects have come from the deep traditions of Canada, the ones he observed growing up. For Pachter, making art and engaging with Canadian history have become inseparable. As we talked, he pulled century-old books from his library shelves and launched into reflections on Governor John Graves Simcoe's dream for Upper Canada, the relevance of monarchy, and how driving across Canada in an old Mini at the age of twenty-seven changed his perspectives forever.

At seventy-three, Pachter shows little sign of slowing down. He wrote and illustrated a bestselling children's book, *M is For Moose*, replete with historical images and text. He has big plans for his country home and gallery, Moose Factory of Orillia — MOFO. And in 2016 Pachter will take the imagery of Canada to the mother country. In August an exhibition of recent Pachter works and classic images will open in the Great Hall of the historic Charterhouse in London, England, before moving on to Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford University.

He takes pleasure in his success, not just at making a career in art but in creating images that live in the imagination wherever people take an interest in the idea of Canada. One time an art student asked him why he didn't move beyond Canadian images and paint on more universal themes. Pachter was quick to point out that "what makes art universal is promotion and distribution." For Pachter, Canadian history really has been a route to both artistic inspiration and commercial success.

// See more images at CanadasHistory.ca/Pachter

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of Canada's History.

CASTLE FRANK IN WINTER

acrylic on canvas, 1983

"Castle Frank was built by the Simcoes in the forest north of the infant town of York [now Toronto] as [the Simcoe family's] summer retreat, in the neoclassic style of a Palladian villa, made from pine logs," Pachter said. "In 1793, Mrs. Simcoe wrote in her diary: 'We went six miles by water from the Fort, and east along the bay shore to the Don, and up that river, landed, climbed up an exceedingly steep hill, or rather a series of sugar-loafed hills, and approved of the highest spot, from whence we looked down on the tops of large trees and seeing eagles near, I suppose they build there. There are large pine plains around it, which being without underwood, I can ride and walk on, and we hope the height of the situation will secure us from mosquitoes. We dined by a large fire on wild ducks and chowder.'"

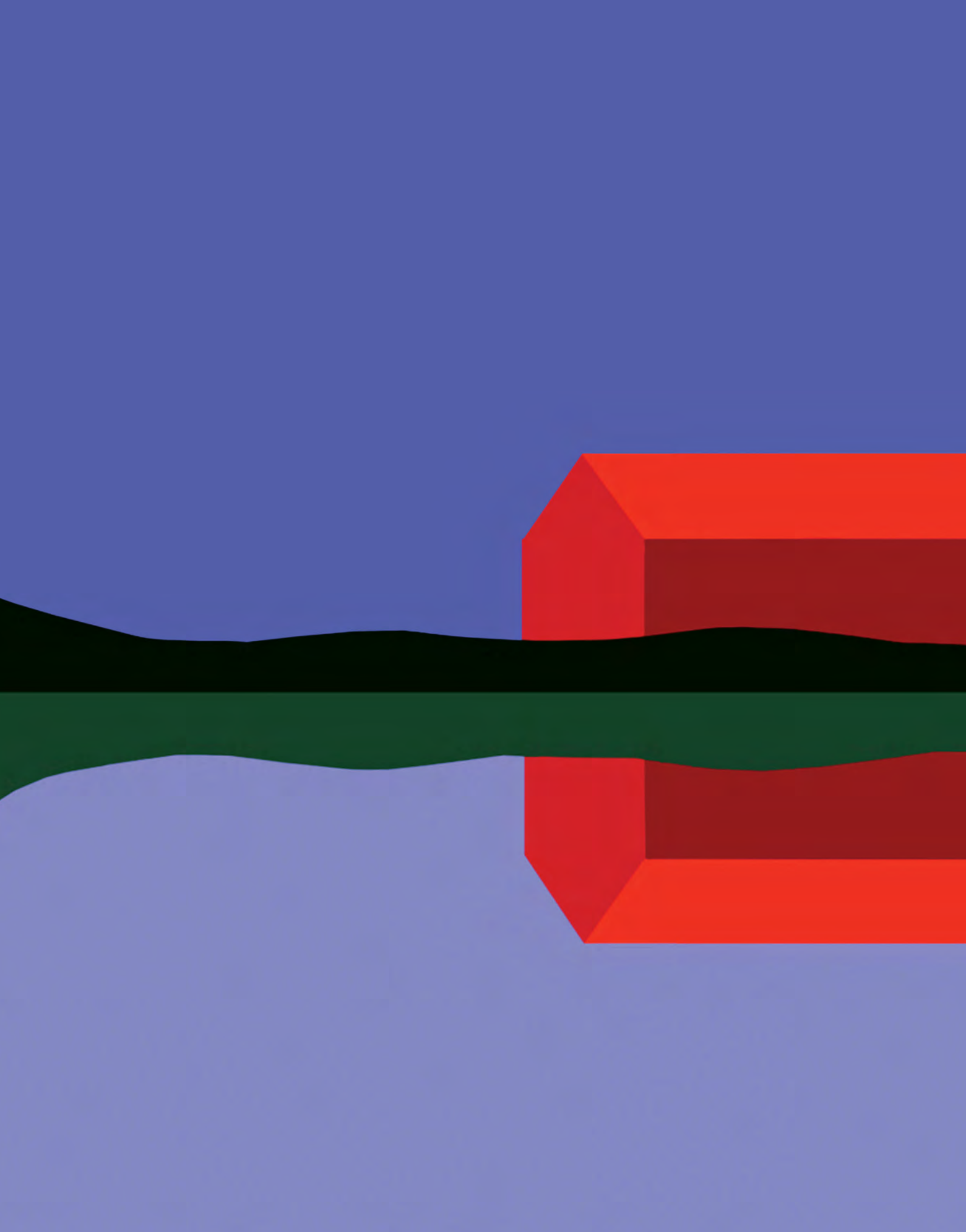
DRESSED TO KILL *acrylic on canvas, 2012*

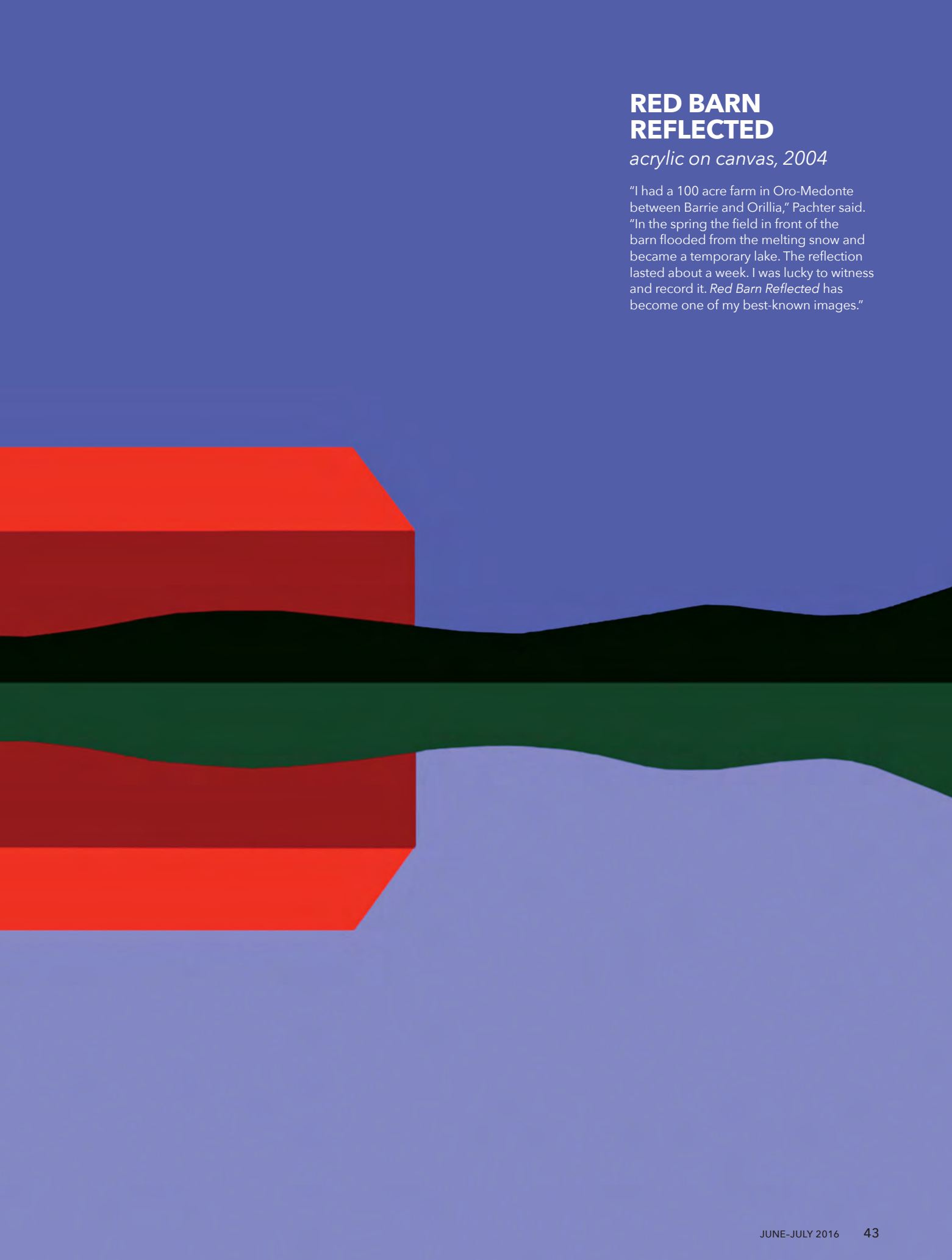
"Faded memories and revisionist histories often gloss over the grim realities of long-past conflicts. Most of the emphasis is on crisp uniforms, polished rifles and boots, immaculate white triangular tents, and more on what they wore than on the suffering and horrors of battle," said Pachter. "During a re-enactment I witnessed in 2010 at Fort Erie, a few 'soldiers' actually passed out from the August heat. Imagine what the real thing must have been like on the battlefield in 1812 in those itchy woollen uniforms!"

SIMCOE'S ILLUSION

acrylic and coloured pencil on canvas, 1991

"After poring through several biographies and Ernest Cruikshank's volumes of *The Simcoe Papers* over a decade of reading, I created *Simcoe's Illusion*," said Pachter. "The facial expression tries to capture his resolute will to recreate the new British colonial paradise of Upper Canada after fighting in the American Revolutionary War and witnessing the 'paradise lost' of the Thirteen Colonies. A dreamer and enthusiast, visionary and proud colonial career officer, he was a key figure in the creation of modern English Canada."





RED BARN REFLECTED

acrylic on canvas, 2004

"I had a 100 acre farm in Oro-Medonte between Barrie and Orillia," Pachter said. "In the spring the field in front of the barn flooded from the melting snow and became a temporary lake. The reflection lasted about a week. I was lucky to witness and record it. *Red Barn Reflected* has become one of my best-known images."

DRESSAGE *acrylic and pastel on canvas, 1988*

"The Queen and Moose series has become my best-known examination of the post-colonial Canadian psyche," Pachtel said. "I have always been fascinated by the fact that our head of state doesn't live here. So, by placing her atop the Canadian monarch of the North, I created an iconic image that causes viewers to reflect on this: '*Qui sommes-nous, où allons nous*?' [Who are we? Where are we going?] Monarchists love me, as do republicans! Both sides see these images as supporting their ideologies."

HOCKEY KNIGHTS IN CANADA *acrylic on canvas, 1984*

Christopher Moore: "Is it true that Harold Ballard, the former owner of the Toronto Maple Leafs, would not let you put an image of the Montreal Canadiens in Maple Leaf Gardens, so the Hockey Knights murals had to go in the College subway stop nearby?"

Charles Pachter: "Not true! I was commissioned by the TTC to create these murals for the College subway station in 1985, as it was the stop for Maple Leaf Gardens. Ballard was furious at me for installing the Leafs and the Canadiens in the same locale! All his fulminating did was cause the media to cover the opening and show the murals to the public. The murals have now been in the station for thirty years."

THE SUPREMES *acrylic and pastel on canvas, 2008*

"I painted *The Supremes* in 1981, and I couldn't resist the mischievous title," Pachter said. "I depicted them in their red-and-white robes resembling a group of Santa Claus clones. We used to think of Supreme Court judges as being serious and black-robed. As they and the Charter become more important, how wonderful to have such colours to work with, yes? Several years later, when women became Supremes, I did a more inclusive version."

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GREEN TERROR

Battle of Ridgeway, C.W., colour lithograph by Sage, Sons, and Co., Buffalo, New York, circa 1869.

The Fenian raids on Canada might seem comical today, but back in 1866 the threat posed by Irish insurgents was no laughing matter. *by Steven Henry Martin*

THE FENIAN BANNER.

But the Harp, that so long hath been silent and weeping.
Resigned by its master in gloom and despair,
Shall again be brought forth from the shrine where 'tis sleeping,
And with glad notes of freedom enliven the air.

When the voice of the brave with its echoes shall m
In the clangor of arms, or the transport of gle
For the millions who love it will shortly assemble
To proclaim that their nation again shall be

EARLY ON JUNE 1, 1866, UNDER A BRIGHT MOON, an advance party of two hundred and fifty battle-hardened veterans of the American Civil War crossed the Niagara River from Buffalo, New York. Not far behind was an eight-hundred-strong army led by John O'Neill, a Civil War legend. After landing on Canadian soil near Fort Erie, Canada West (now Ontario), the advance force planted a large green flag emblazoned with a gold Irish harp. The first Fenian invasion of Canada had begun.

The event has often been mocked and downplayed as a ludicrous and roundabout attempt by Irish-American nationalists to assert independence for their home country. The late historian Donald Creighton described the invaders as "grandiloquent clowns and vainglorious incompetents." But for the patriots of a young Canada and the exiles of an oppressed Ireland who clashed on the eve of Confederation, the Battle of Ridgeway was a matter of life and death. The threat of what was sometimes called the "green terror" was serious.

Founded in 1858, the Fenian Brotherhood was by 1861 the largest national organization in the United States, with fifty thousand members. Its stated aim was to overthrow British rule in Ireland and establish an Irish republic. Taking its name from the *fianna* — landless warriors of Irish mythology — the Fenian Brotherhood had a powerful weapon at the ready — tens of thousands of recently discharged Irish-American Civil War soldiers, most of whom were unemployed and accustomed to war.

The original Fenian plan was to get these men to Ireland, but it seemed increasingly unlikely that they could get them past the British Royal Navy. Canada, however, was a part of the British Empire, contained thousands of Irish-born immigrants, and was just next door.

The publicly stated rationale for invading Canada was to make the country a staging ground for attacks on British naval ships, or to use the occupation of Canada as a bargaining chip in negotiations with the British. The likelihood of these plans succeeding seemed slim to say the least. But at least one historian — professor David Wilson of the University of Toronto — offers another explanation for this seemingly foolish plan. "There was a component to the Fenian strategy which couldn't be expressed publicly but was expressed in private correspondence, and that was the hope and expectation that a Fenian invasion could trigger an Anglo-American war," said Wilson. Such a war would force the British to direct their military might towards the United States and away from Ireland, making it easier for the latter to gain independence.

The idea of attacking Canada was very controversial within the Fenian ranks. John O'Mahoney, president of the Fenian Brotherhood, was bitterly opposed, but the faction that supported invasion rapidly grew in strength after the end of the American Civil War (1861–65). In February 1866, the membership approved a

LEFT: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; RIGHT: LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

Left to right: A Fenian banner. *The Green Above the Red* depicts an imaginary incident during the 1866 Fenian raids. Men from Metcalfe, Canada West (Ontario), still in their civilian clothes, volunteer in 1865 to defend against impending raids by Fenians. The locomotive *Milwaukee* of the Welland Railway Company, carries a sign saying "God Bless Our Brave Volunteers." The locomotive was used to transport militia from St. Catharines to Port Colborne to meet Fenian invaders in June 1866. A portrait of John Stoughton Dennis, who led an ill-fated attack against the Fenians in Fort Erie.

plan of invasion presented by T.W. Sweeny, who had served in the Union Army during the war.

Sweeny's plan called for a three-pronged attack on Canada: from Chicago over water to Goderich, on the east shore of Lake Huron; from Detroit and Buffalo into the Niagara peninsula; and from Vermont into Canada East (now Quebec). The attacks in Canada West were to serve as decoys for the main attack on Quebec City and Montreal, which were thought to be easier to hold.

Meanwhile, members of the O'Mahoney faction, pressured to take military action, also came up with a plan. In April, they assembled a Fenian force in Maine, intending to capture Campobello Island off New Brunswick. But authorities easily stopped them in their tracks.

When Sweeny's invasion was called, far fewer fighting men showed up for duty than expected. At Chicago, ships that were supposed to carry the invading force never left port. At Vermont, several hundred Fenians marched into Canada East and, encountering no resistance, proceeded to steal livestock and liquor from area farmers before beating a hasty retreat as a Canadian militia force approached. Only the centre, led by O'Neill, saw the Fenians put up a fight — and win — on Canadian soil.

Canadians living near the border had been anxious about overheated rumours of invasion for months. The United States showed little interest in stopping the Fenians. Diplomatic relations between Britain and the U.S. were strained — the Americans were seeking compensation for damages wrought by British-built warships that had been sold to the Confederate navy. Only five years earlier American Secretary of State William Seward had "entertained the idea … of attacking Canada, thinking a war against Britain could unite the warring [American] states," said Wilson.

It didn't help that there were conflicts between Irish Catholics and Protestant Orangemen in Canada at the time. A prominent Irish Catholic leader in Toronto, tavern-keeper Michael Murphy, was a Fenian sympathizer whom the government kept under close surveillance.

In March of 1866, there was a flurry of excitement when the call went out for militia volunteers — more than fourteen thousand responded. They were to augment the small force of British regulars stationed in Canada. After bracing for an invasion around St. Patrick's Day, which never came, the citizen soldiers returned home. Then, in late May, came credible reports of thousands of Fenians assembling at Buffalo. Once again, thousands of volunteers rushed to report for duty.

One of them was Charles Hunter of the Barrie Rifles. "The feeling of Americans at this time was not too friendly," recalled Hunter in 1911. "A Buffalo newspaper voiced popular sentiment in saying, 'we don't wish Canada ill but a little healthy scaring won't do them any harm.'"

The Canadian troops were not experienced military men. They

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

were shopkeepers, clerks, millers, and teachers. Many were students. Several from the University of Toronto were pulled away from studying for their final exams. Some of the volunteers had not even practised firing their rifles prior to Ridgeway. They had no ammunition to spare for practice, anyway. Many arrived for duty with just ten bullets in their pockets. A standard issue for combat troops, by comparison, was forty — sixty if you were sure you were going into battle. Their commanders at least managed to find an additional thirty bullets per man.

Through the night of May 31, British regulars and Canadian militia assembled at Chippawa (present-day Niagara Falls) under the field commander, Lieutenant-Colonel George L. Peacocke, a professional British officer who was well regarded by his peers. A second force of mainly inexperienced young volunteers assembled under Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Booker at Port Colborne, located about thirty-five kilometres south of Chippawa on the north shore of Lake Erie. Booker was a wealthy Hamilton merchant and long-time volunteer militia officer but had no previous battle experience.

Meanwhile, Fenian leader John O'Neill had by the morning of June 1 established a strong defensive position in the area of Frenchman's Creek just north of Fort Erie — about twenty-five kilometres from Booker's troops and thirty kilometres from Peacocke's force.

Peacocke instructed Booker by telegram to go to Stevensville, a small community near Fort Erie. There they would join forces before engaging the Fenians, whom they believed were nearby at Black Creek.

Unknown to Peacocke, Booker had other plans. He, along with Lieutenant-Colonel John Stoughton Dennis, a social-climbing militia officer who sported the extraordinarily bushy sideburns that were in fashion at the time, and Captain Charles Akers, a British Army engineer, had received word that the Fenians were at Frenchman's

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Orangeville Volunteers of 1866, Ready to Meet the Fenian Raiders, by Staples Owen, circa 1925.

Creek. They planned to retake Fort Erie — Dennis would arrive on the tugboat *W.T. Robb* and blockade the Niagara River, preventing the Fenians from fleeing or receiving support from the American side; Booker would head for Fort Erie by train and then move north to link up with Peacocke and attack the main Fenian army.

The legitimacy of the plan hinged on Peacocke's approval of the change by telegraph. Strangely, without waiting for their field commander's blessing, Dennis left Port Colborne with Akers and about seventy troops on the *Robb*. Fifteen minutes later, Booker received Peacocke's angry rejection of the proposed change and was ordered to proceed to Stevensville in the morning.

Booker and his troops took the train to Ridgeway — about halfway between Port Colborne and Fort Erie. From Ridgeway they were to march north to Stevensville by foot. There are some who suspect that Booker did not intend to rendezvous with Peacocke but was trying to run into the Fenians on his own and win a great victory. George T. Denison, who would later chair an inquiry into Booker's competence, believed that he left Port Colborne much earlier than Peacocke intended, allowing him to engage the enemy long before the field commander could arrive.

O'Neill, however, was two steps ahead of the Canadians. After tearing up rail tracks and telegraph lines at Fort Erie, and demanding breakfast and other provisions from residents of the town, he had taken his force to Black Creek and then south to a place called Limestone Ridge, where he intended to intercept Booker.

Limestone Ridge was a ten-metre-high hill with good tree cover. The farm families living in the area had fled by the time the Fenians arrived. One man, however, remained. Henry F. Angur was seventy-three years old, afflicted with gout, and used crutches to get around. But he did not scare easily. Angur was a veteran of the War of 1812

AS THEY WATCHED THE MASS OF FENIANS APPROACH, THE MEN WAITED FOR THE ORDER TO FIRE. BUT DENNIS DID NOT GIVE THE ORDER.

and the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion and told his family he would not leave, since he had "been in two wars and would risk a third."

Angur's house was commandeered by O'Neill and used as a Fenian headquarters. O'Neill's men were able to view troop movements as far as five kilometres across a broad span of flat fields below.

At 7:00 a.m. on June 2, Booker's men set out from Ridgeway along Ridge Road. The Thirteenth Battalion marched with its flag unfurled. A small crowd followed the men out of town. On either side of the road were open fields of crops and grass wet with the morning dew; they were divided by split-rail fences running perpendicular to the road. At about 7:25 a.m., the men were fired on by Fenian skirmishers hidden behind a fence. The Fenians then quickly disappeared into an apple orchard.

Booker ordered the Queen's Own Rifles and York Rifles to advance. The soldiers clambered over the wooden fences and across open fields as bullets whizzed around their heads. Among them was Ensign Malcolm McEachern, a thirty-five-year-old Sunday school teacher and father of five who was considered a good shot. McEachern and his comrades took shelter behind a fence. While trying to remove a fence rail so that he could get a clear line of sight, he was shot in the abdomen. One of the soldiers who brought him off the field reported his strange last words: "Jesus, I have often dreamt of dying thus." McEachern was the first of the nine Canadian defenders to die that day.

Observing the advance of the Canadians was a Fenian captain, John S. Mullen, a veteran who had been wounded in battle during the American Civil War. He later recalled, "To most of us, who had been in the war, it was plain that fighting was new to them. They exposed themselves unnecessarily, which trained men never do."

As the volunteer soldiers moved through the orchard, Fenian bullets cut through the trees, causing the Canadians to be showered with thousands of apple blossoms. Laying down, they could hear the bullets whizzing into the tree trunks above them.They managed to push the Fenians out of one orchard and into another stand of fruit trees across a road. Until now, Limestone Ridge had stood silent on the western edge of the battlefield. Fenian riflemen began to rain fire on the Canadians in the hopes of catching them off guard.

Booker ordered the University Rifles and Highlanders to clear the ridge. Incredibly, the inexperienced militiamen managed to push up the wooded slope and to force the Fenians to retreat. The University Rifles pursued them, heading straight for the Fenian main force still concealed in the trees. Firing from the cover of tree stumps, the University Rifles were so far in advance that they were taking fire from their own troops behind them.

Booker had taken cover behind a barn in the rearguard when a cry of "Cavalry!" was heard. Despite no horses being seen, and the fact that the fence-riddled terrain precluded the possibility of an effective cavalry charge, Booker ordered the troops in the vicinity to "form square" on the road — a textbook defensive manoeuvre against a cavalry charge. Forming a square in the middle of the road made them sitting ducks for the Fenian riflemen, who picked them off where they stood.

Seeing his error, Booker ordered his men to withdraw. The retreat turned into a confused mess of men running for their own lives. By the time the Canadians straggled in to Port Colborne, their anger at their commanding officer was already growing. A month later, one of the members of the Hamilton militia, T. Watkins Jones, wrote a frank assessment of Booker in a letter home: "Our Colonel 'Booker' … has showed himself (altho' a good drill) to be quite incompetent to command men in danger, and that he does not see far enough ahead to provide for the comfort of the men or for any exigency that might arise, in addition to which he is a conceited, arrogant, cowardly, nervous poltroon."

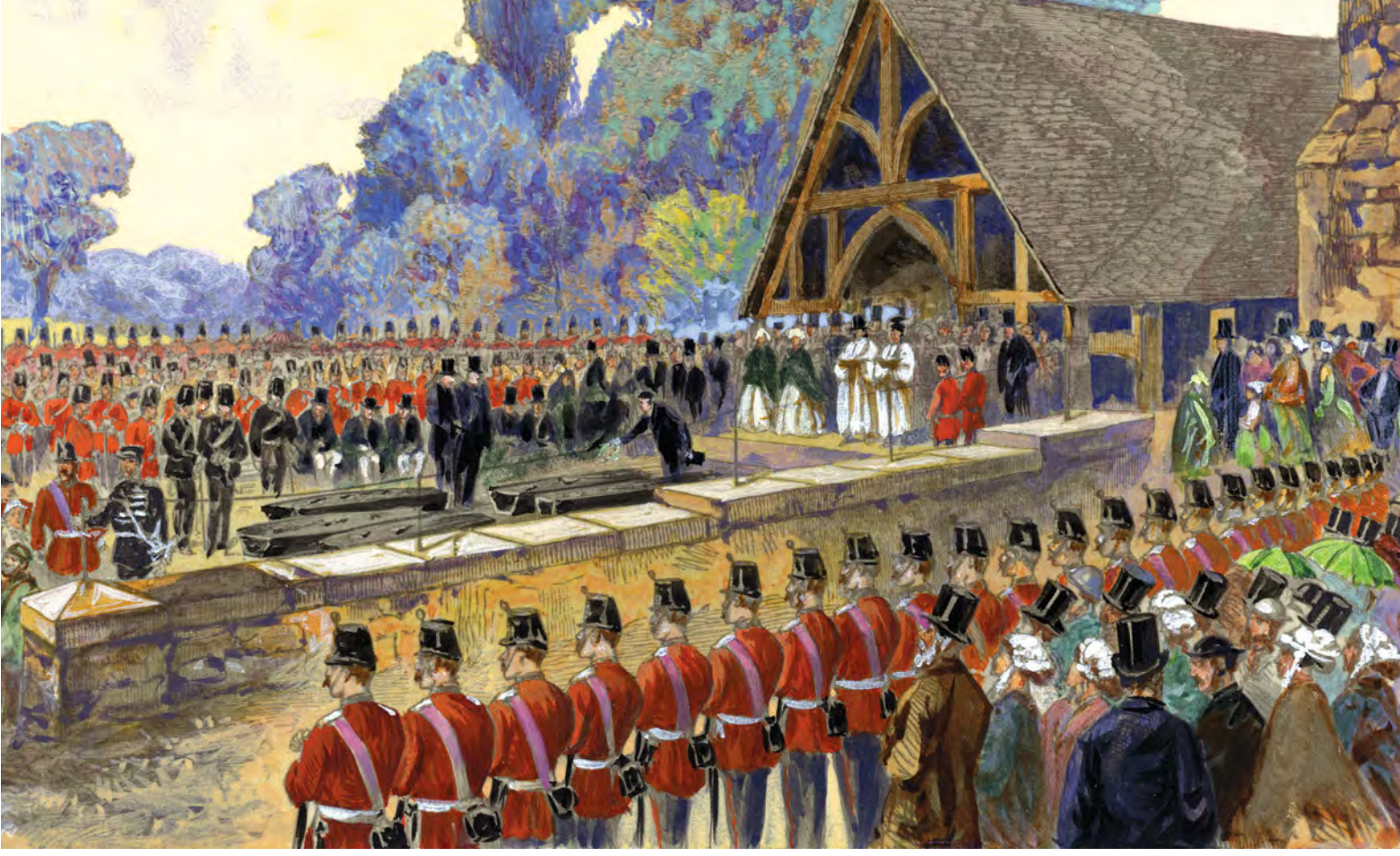
Fortunately for Booker, O'Neill did not press the pursuit. The American warship U.S.S. *Michigan* was preventing reinforcements and supplies from coming across the Niagara. Rather than see his men captured as more Canadian forces arrived, O'Neill resolved to return to Buffalo via Fort Erie.

In the meantime, Lieutenant-Colonel Dennis, who was travelling down the Niagara River by steamer, arrived at an unguarded Fort Erie early in the morning of June 3. After capturing some Fenian stragglers and listening to unfounded rumours — some reported a Canadian victory, others a rout — Dennis chose to believe that the Fenians had been defeated and that the job of his few dozen men was to clean up what was left as they tried to escape. Sometime in the late afternoon, however, the Fenians were spotted coming into town.

Despite the objections of his more sensible subordinates, Dennis marched his men out to meet them. Hundreds of Fenian troops approached from two directions. As they watched the mass of Fenians advance, the men waited for the order to fire. But Dennis hesitated, apparently confused. Captain Lachlan McCallum then took it upon himself to give the order, but Dennis immediately countermanded it. Angrily, McCallum turned to Dennis and said: "Are you going to let the men be shot down like Stoughton bottles?" Shortly afterwards, a shot from the Fenian side rang out above their heads. At that moment, the men heard McCallum shout, "Where the hell are you going?" They turned to see the lieutenant-colonel crouching low and running away from the battle.

The Fenians rushed forward. The vastly outnumbered Canadians fired on them but were soon overrun. The Fenians, however, were not looking for bloodshed that day; nine of them lost their lives taking the Canadians prisoner, while none of the defenders died.

As for Dennis, he turned up at Peacocke's camp to the north at around 3:00 a.m. He had shorn his whiskers and wore a disguise,



Funeral of Canadian Volunteers Killed in a Skirmish with Fenians: Scene in the Cemetery at Toronto from the *Illustrated London News* June 30, 1866. From a wood engraving based on a sketch sent to the magazine by C. Fuller of Toronto.

which included a large black moustache. He and Booker were later investigated by commissions of inquiry for their conduct in battle. Both were exonerated — possibly to avoid embarrassment for John A. Macdonald, the minister of militia at the time. "Macdonald's entire future political career could have been sunk if held responsible for this chaos," said Peter Vronsky, an investigative historian who wrote *Ridgeway: The American Fenian Invastion and the 1866 Battle That Made Canada*. "[Canadian spymaster Gerald McMicken] put it best in his letter to Macdonald just before the commission starts sitting: 'the question is who put Booker in command? That is the problem.'"

O'Neill left his Canadian prisoners in Fort Erie and attempted to get his men back to safety across the Niagara, but they were soon caught and detained by the Americans aboard the *Michigan*. On June 6, American President Andrew Jackson issued a neutrality proclamation that ended any hope that the United States would be drawn into the conflict. However, most of the Fenians held by the Americans, including O'Neill, were quietly released in a matter of months.

The Fenians would try twice more to invade Canada — two 1870 assaults on Quebec, both of which were easily repulsed, and an 1871 takeover of a customs office at the Manitoba border, which was halted by the American army. The movement was also blamed for the first political assassination in Canada's history — the April 7, 1868, shooting of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, an Irish-Catholic Member of Parliament who frequently denounced the Fenian cause.

The Fenian threat is sometimes compared to the threat posed today by terrorist groups based in the Middle East. "The Fenian raids were insurgent attacks, and a threat of a terrorist attack designed for political aims," said historian Dmitry Anastakis of Trent University. "That's what terrorism is. We need to remember that for many years Canadians were constantly vigilant for fear of an attack that could end in death for them."

Vronsky agrees, to a point: "In their use of the diaspora of their people, their use of sleepers, their use of the telegram versus the Internet, their use of financial instruments to fund these activities, there are very compelling similarities. Of course there was paranoia as well: There was a sweeping attack on Irish Catholics that [Prime Minister] Macdonald suppressed very quickly."

But there are stark differences, too, notes Vronsky. "Fenians behaved on the battlefield with chivalry and gallantry. Everyone had noted in their testimony the gallant manner in which the Fenian forces behaved towards the civilian population, towards the soldiers, the wounded, and the prisoners. That's where the parallel between al Qaeda and Fenianism fails."

In the history of warfare, the Battle of Ridgeway counts as a minor skirmish. But the event holds a significant place in Canadian history, in that it was the first battle fought exclusively by Canadians.

After 1871, there were no more Fenian attacks. The movement migrated back to Ireland, yet the green terror was a powerful idea for many years after the Battle of Ridgeway. The nine Canadians who died in combat were never given battle honours nor are their names written in Canada's *Books of Remembrance*. A campaign for recognition of the first Canadians to give their lives for the country is ongoing.

// Learn more at CanadasHistory.ca/Fenians

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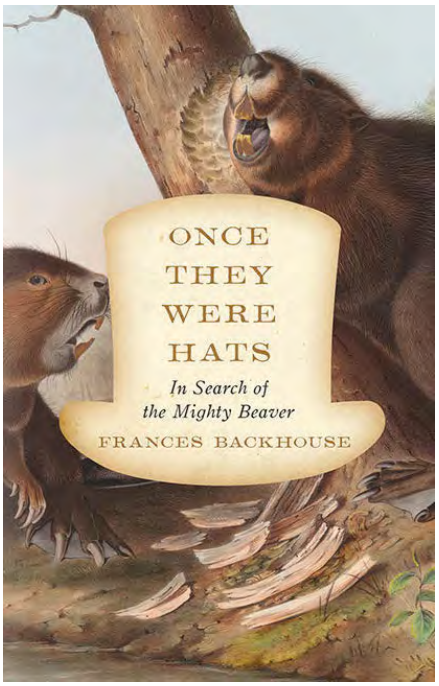

WOOD WORKERS

Once They Were Hats: In Search of the Mighty Beaver

by Frances Backhouse
ECW Press, 272 pages, $18.95

Our cottage neighbours are DIY workaholics: They are constantly renovating their dwellings, clearing trees, breaking trail, and building canals. We rarely hear them, except for indignant splashes when they are alarmed while swimming. But their industry is slowly reshaping our shoreline, and, without constant vigilance from park wardens and cottagers, they would alter the water levels in the lake.

So what's new? *Castor canadensis* has been sculpting the North American landscape for at least a million years. By controlling the flow of water and the accumulation of sediments, beavers have filled valleys, rerouted rivers, and nudged other species down distinctive evolutionary paths. Before fur-mad strangers devastated the population, there were at least sixty million of these bucktoothed rodents spread across the continent, and they had constructed at least twenty-five million dams. In 1797, the explorer David Thompson noted a dam that was 1.6 kilometres in length while he was travelling across the West. Today, the world's longest beaver creation is probably the 850-metre dam in a remote northern Alberta location — Wood Buffalo National Park.

The beaver has represented Canada since before Confederation (in 1851 it appeared on a postage stamp), yet most of us know little about its habits and history. Some people are under the impression that these semi-aquatic mammals eat fish; in fact, they munch on tree bark, water lily roots, and pondweed. But most of us know that any account of post-colonial British North America has to start with *Castor canadensis*. Furs, and particularly beaver pelts destined for the hat trade, were the first of the primary products on which the Canadian economy has always depended so heavily.

> While travelling across the West in 1797, explorer David Thompson noted a beaver dam that was 1.6 kilometres long.

Now Frances Backhouse has blended natural history, anthropology, science, and adventure into a compelling account of our national symbol. In *Once They Were Hats*, she sketches the role of beavers within First Peoples' cultures, and she discusses the beaver's importance as a keystone species. Along the way we meet trappers, hatters, paleontologists, conservationists, elders, traders, and biologists.

Backhouse is a lively reporter, telling us all about her hike to Grey Owl's former cabin, Beaver Lodge, in Saskatchewan's Prince Albert National Park ("weighed down by my fully loaded backpack and sweating inside the compulsory bug shirt") and the smell of North America's largest fur auction ("kennel scent; butcher shop undertones; a whiff of musk"). We find her learning how to trap a beaver, cure a pelt, and face her own ambivalence about slaughtering wild animals. And she effortlessly incorporates into her captivating narrative the kind of information that snags anybody's attention.

For example, beaver meat is premium fare because it provides three times more calories than other wild meat, such as caribou or moose, plus a fattiness that helps humans absorb the protein. It has therefore always been a critical food for indigenous peoples. However, Europeans had an additional reason to hunt beavers for food. In the Middle Ages, church authorities classified the animal's scaly flat tail as fish, which meant it could be eaten during Lent. (I'm not sure what they did with the rest of the beaver, since the body meat remained off-limits.)

The most extraordinary aspect of the story is the beaver's resilience. From dominating the landscape half a millennium ago, beaver populations sank as low as 100,000 at the start of the twentieth century. Concerns about extinction, and the recognition of the beaver's important role in preserving wetlands, has allowed the population to bounce back to somewhere between ten and fifty million. In some regions, especially in the arid West, the renaissance is welcomed as a return to a healthy ecology; in others, particularly cottage country, beaver activities have catapulted the animals straight back into the feral-menace category.

But, thanks to Backhouse's thoughtful, fascinating exploration of beaver know-how, I will not complain about the neighbours next summer. Instead, I'll have my binoculars trained on them.

Reviewed by **Charlotte Gray**, the former chair of Canada's National History Society. Her tenth book, *The Promise of Canada*, will be published in the fall of 2016.

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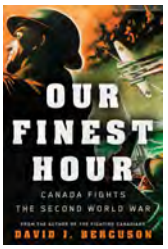
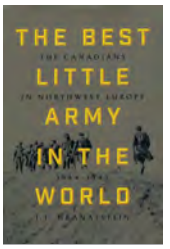




Our Finest Hour: Canada Fights the Second World War

by David J. Bercuson
Harper Collins, 540 pages, $34.99

The Best Little Army in the World: The Canadians in Northwest Europe, 1944–1945

by J.L. Granatstein
Patrick Crean Editions,
350 pages, $32.99

The American writer Studs Terkel once described the Second World War as the "Good War." To the extent that any war is good, the one fought against fascism and militarism between 1939 and 1945 certainly lacked moral ambiguity: The good guys and the bad guys were clearly drawn, the cause was noble, and the sacrifice — for some — was worth making.

David Bercuson captures this theme well in the latest edition of his old standby *Maple Leaf Against the Axis*, now revised, updated, and re-released as *Our Finest Hour*. His subtitle, *Canada Fights the Second World War*, reveals the focus of his book: primarily Canadian military operations. Two of Bercuson's seventeen chapters are devoted to non-operational issues, one dealing with industrial mobilization and another with Canada's role within the larger Anglo-American alliance. The rest chronicle the activities of the armed forces from September 1939 to victory in May 1945.

Bercuson knows his stuff, and he has mastered the literature up to 2014. The book traces Canadian naval, air, and army operations around the world and does a good job of setting the how and why of their deployment into the wider strategic context of the war. He writes well, the text is eminently readable, and Bercuson has infused it with first-person accounts and excellent quotes to capture some of the flavour of the experience.

There is also a little something for those who are interested in the ongoing debates among historians over issues like the "failure" of Operation Totalize to smash through the German lines south of Caen, France, in early August 1944. Based on the latest accounts, Bercuson has rewritten this section (and many others besides) — and in a footnote he points out that he, too, had been too harsh in his judgment in earlier versions of *Maple Leaf Against the Axis*. Specialists in any number of fields will find points to quibble with (this one did), but the overall result is the most comprehensive short survey of Canada's fighting that is available in print.

Jack Granatstein's latest offering, *The Best Little Army in the World*, focuses on the operations of First Canadian Army in Northwest Europe between June 1944 and May 1945. Here, too, the title tells us what the book is about. Over the years, the Canadian Army has taken a beating from friends and foes alike for its apparent failures in the final stages of the Second World War — a stark contrast to the much-heralded triumphs of their fathers and uncles a generation earlier in the Canadian Corps. For generations of historians, the Canadians were too slow coming off the beaches of Normandy, they failed to take Caen early in the campaign, failed to close the Falaise Gap, failed to take the Scheldt Estuary in a week as Field Marshal B.L. Montgomery had instructed, and failed to burst through the Reichswald-Hochwald defences quickly, despite overwhelming power. Generations of Canadians believed that their Second World War army — at its peak in 1944–45 — was a pale imitation of the vaunted Canadian Corps that smashed the Germans in the Hundred Days campaign of 1918 (the subject of Granatstein's previous book).

The interpretation of the Canadians as somewhat bungling enthusiasts has been undermined by recent Canadian scholarship. *The Best Little Army in the World* draws on that literature, and on Granatstein's own vast research over the last five decades, to attack that myth. Where others found the First Canadian Army a glass half empty, Granatstein finds it half full and filling fast as the war dragged on. As he says at the end of the introduction, "Their performance was superb."

There is much more to be said about Canada's war effort than what is contained in these two fine books by veteran historians. Canada made an enormous contribution in science, industry, and resource extraction, and modern Canada was forged in the process. But for Bercuson and Granatstein, our finest hour was what Canadians did at the front — in our commitment of blood and treasure — to liberate Europe from tyranny. The view is laid bare in Bercuson's afterword, in which he quotes the Talmud: "He who saves one life saves the world."

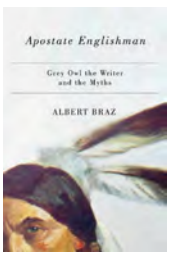
For reasons that are perhaps peculiar to Canadians, between 1939 and 1945 we punched above our weight, and these two books tell us how and why. Bercuson concludes that Canada's soldiers, sailors, and airmen "helped save the world many times over" during the Second World War. Studs Terkel would have agreed.

Reviewed by **Marc Milner**, director of the Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society at the University of New Brunswick and widely published on the Second World War, especially regarding Canada's role.

ALTER EGO

Apostate Englishman: Grey Owl the Writer and the Myths

by Albert Braz
University of Manitoba Press,
214 pages, $27.95



Albert Braz's *Apostate Englishman* presents a comprehensive study of Grey Owl, whose death in 1938 triggered an international scandal. Grey Owl was a famed trapper-turned-conservationist and the author of four bestselling books on conservation in Canada. The indigenous identity claimed by Grey Owl allowed him a curious public credibility by reinforcing the notion of Aboriginal people as somehow intrinsically in tune with

the natural world. Yet the legitimacy of his conservation work was questioned following his death, when the public learned that Grey Owl was really an Englishman named Archie Belaney.

Braz argues that many of those who were troubled by Grey Owl's appropriation of an indigenous identity were in fact bothered by something else that they considered far more nefarious — the rejection of European culture in a process Braz designates "cultural apostasy," or the adoption of cultural views different from those of their own society. This approach guides Braz's account of the life and work of Grey Owl.

Born in 1888, Archibald Belaney was an upper-class Brit whose family was known in literary circles. Despite experiencing some upheaval early in life, Belaney lived a comfortable English childhood pursuing music and Bible study. Though his family planned for him to migrate to Canada to become a farmer, Belaney, who had imagined belonging to the indigenous and natural world for nearly his whole life, had other plans.

Upon his arrival in the New World, he quickly moved on to build his dream. While working as a guide at Temagami, Ontario, Belaney met Angele Egwuna, an Anishinabe woman who would eventually become his first — though not his last, or only — wife. Grey Owl continued to work as a guide and trapper and even enlisted in the Canadian Army, serving in the First World War. It was after his return to Canada that he met Gertrude Bernard, also known as Anahareo, an urban Mohawk woman only five years his daughter's senior. Bernard inspired Belaney's ultimate transformation into a conservationist and a writer, but she unceremoniously left him, much as he had done to several previous partners.

Belaney's story and writings offer a fascinating glimpse into early to mid-twentieth century Canadiana. Regardless of his actual origins, there can be no doubt that Belaney — or Grey Owl, as he preferred to be called — developed an identity that rooted him more firmly in his conservationist cause. In his first essays submitted to *Forest and Outdoors* magazine in 1930, for example, Grey Owl positioned himself as a "converted" trapper and added that he was a man of Indian blood.

Certainly, Grey Owl took liberties — but his assertion of his own indigenous character also rejected the legal categorizations of his time. Grey Owl's identity was a cultural one, something that was not alien to communities of indigenous people in Canada who had long considered membership to be rooted in belonging, rather than exclusively in blood.

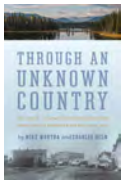
Apostate Englishman includes important literary analysis, colourful stories about the man and his life, and keen observations on the issues of indigenous status and cultural appropriation. The controversy that surrounded his identity in the wake of his 1938 death demonstrated that Grey Owl was more than just a man — in 1930s Canada, Grey Owl was also a brand. Braz does a great deal to explain Grey Owl and his life but leaves it to readers to determine whether Grey Owl was a calculating fraud or simply a man who chose to reinvent himself within the context of the life he lived and continually re-imagined.

Reviewed by **Karine Duhamel**, the former program coordinator for Canada's History Society and now a researcher and curator of indigenous content at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

MORE BOOKS

Through an Unknown Country: The Jarvis-Hanington Winter Expedition through the Northern Rockies, 1874–1875

by Mike Murtha and Charles Helm
Rocky Mountain Books, 272 pages, $30



Never heard of the Jarvis-Hanington winter expedition? Neither had I. This book brings to light a forgotten journey into the Rocky Mountains to scout a possible route for the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In 1874, plans for a transcontinental railway were well underway. Survey teams were sent to find the best routes. One team was assigned to explore a northern route through the mountains, starting at what is now Quesnel, British Columbia, and then making its way eastward across the northern prairies, through Fort Edmonton, and on to Winnipeg. The gruelling 165-day trip covered three thousand kilometres, and almost half the distance was completed on snowshoes.

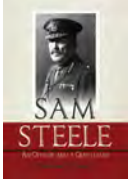
Civil engineers Edward Jarvis and Charles Hanington came close to starvation and to freezing to death as they crossed the unmapped and near impenetrable Smoky River Pass — later named Jarvis Pass — with dog teams. It was an epic journey by any measure. In the end, the route was deemed unsuitable for the railway.

Rather than weaving a single narrative out of the available material, the authors present each source separately. Thus the opening chapter is Jarvis's official report, the second chapter is Hanington's journal, followed by a chapter with excerpts of Jarvis's journals, and so on. Chapter five helpfully puts the expedition in perspective, and the final chapter gives biographies of the men who were involved.

Some repetition is unavoidable when using this approach to tell a story. But the book, which has good photos and maps, should appeal to readers interested in this little-known aspect of railway-building history. — *Nelle Oosterom*

Sam Steele: An Officer and a Gentleman

by Norman S. Leach
Dundurn Press, 144 pages, $22.99



Larger than life — it's a phrase that's tossed around too often when describing history's most colourful characters. In Canadian history, there are only a few that would fit the bill: Sir John A. Macdonald, for certain. Maybe Nellie McClung or Pierre Trudeau. And there's the man who made the figure of the Mountie the icon it is today: Sir Sam Steele.

In *Sam Steele: An Officer and a Gentleman*, Calgary author and historian Norman Leach mines the Steele family archives for images and anecdotes that help to flesh out the myth surrounding the man who — if legend is to be believed — single-handedly brought law and order to the West.

Steele was a key figure in many of Canada's seminal moments, from the Riel Rebel-

lion/Resistance, to the Yukon gold rush, to the Boer War and the Great War. This slim softcover book is filled with black-and-white photos that show Steele as he climbed from militiaman, to Mountie, to a general of Canada's armed forces.

This isn't the definitive biography of Steele, but it is a great overview for those who are interested in learning the broad-strokes story of one of Canada's most compelling characters. — *Mark Collin Reid*

Seeking Our Eden: The Dreams and Migrations of Sarah Jameson Craig

by Joanne Findon
McGill-Queen's University Press,
240 pages, $34.95

A woman in trousers in nineteenth-century rural New Brunswick undoubtedly drew stares and disapproval. But for Sarah Jameson Craig (1840–1919) this was just one of many ways she fiercely lived her unconventional values during a life marked by perseverance, a sense of adventure, and an unwavering search for something more — all amid extreme poverty.

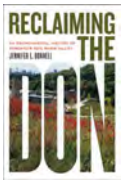
In *Seeking Our Eden*, Trent University literature professor Joanne Findon artfully explores the life of her great-grandmother — a prolific diarist, "backwoods intellectual," staunch activist, and restless soul — through the comprehensive records Craig left behind.

Despite a poverty-stricken farm upbringing that did not prioritize women's education, Craig was a voracious reader determined to learn about the world beyond her isolated community. Her diaries document her passionate advocacy for progressive causes such as alternative medicines, women's equality, and dress reform as well as plans for a utopian colony of the like-minded. All the while, she struggled desperately to feed her thirteen children.

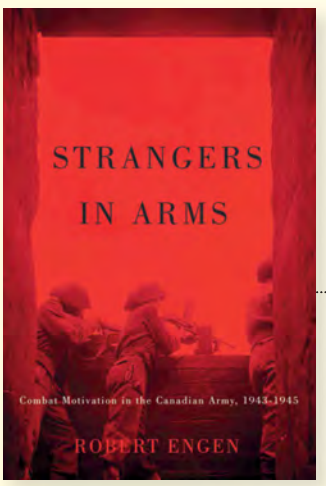
Craig's drive to improve her lot led her to New Jersey, to Saskatchewan, and as far as British Columbia in a hopeful, determined search for the best life had to offer: her "Eden." Findon compellingly juxtaposes Craig's social position with her progressive and utopian dreams, thereby making her story a fascinating and valuable piece of Canadian history. — *Sandy Klowak*

Reclaiming the Don: An Environmental History of Toronto's Don River Valley

by Jennifer L. Bonnell
University of Toronto Press,
311 pages, $29.95



Jennifer Bonnell introduces her book by describing a farcical attempt at trouble-shooting in the days leading up to a 1958 royal visit by Princess Margaret. Rather belatedly, Toronto organizers realized that the section of the Don River that was to be part of her tour was an eyesore — not to mention, ahem, *malodorous*. Newspapers of the day commented on ineffective attempts to disinfect the waters; how-



Strangers in Arms
Combat Motivation in the Canadian Army, 1943–1945
ROBERT ENGEN
Cloth, eBook – 332pp

A penetrating study of why soldiers fight and what sustained Canadians in battle during the Second World War.

Picturing Toronto
Photography and the Making of a Modern City
SARAH BASSNETT
Cloth – 228pp

Both a lavishly illustrated book and the first study to treat images as vital elements that shaped Toronto's social and political history.

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ever, over time the story grew to suggest that perfumed water had been released upstream and was timed to coincide with the royal visitor's walk across a bridge.

The story is an apt allegory for a burgeoning city that focused on the wants of industry and then frantically sought a band-aid solution to hide decades of neglect after ignoring the need for a long-term and inclusive vision.

Reclaiming the Don considers two hundred years of attempts to "improve" the Don River. As Bonnell observes, perceptions of what constitutes "improvement" have competed against each other and evolved over time.

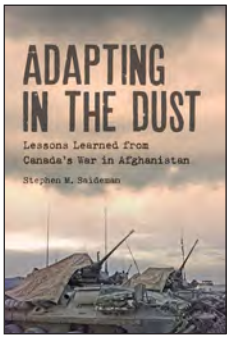
The eighty-plus pages devoted to endnotes, references, and an index will warm the hearts of dedicated researchers. For those who are more visually inclined, almost forty images, illustrations, and maps are presented in black-and-white, with the exception of four glossy colour plates.

Fortified by careful research but not overly academic in its approach, *Reclaiming the Don* is written in a way to be broadly understood. Bonnell's book is replete with anecdotes and reflections, including some that are comedic and others that are heartbreaking. — *Tanja Hütter*

New from University of Toronto Press

Separate Beds
A History of Indian Hospitals in Canada, 1920s-1980s
by Maureen K. Lux
A disturbing look at the dark side of the liberal welfare state, *Separate Beds* reveals a history of racism and negligence in health care for Canada's First Nations that should never be forgotten.

Living with War
Twentieth-Century Conflict in Canadian and American History and Memory
by Robert Teigrob
A provocative book, *Living with War* offers an intriguing look at how Canadians and Americans have regarded war and peace for more than a century.



Adapting in the Dust
Lessons Learned from Canada's War in Afghanistan
by Stephen M. Saideman
Adapting in the Dust is a vital evaluation of how well Canada's institutions, parties, and policy makers responded to the need to oversee and sustain Canada's six-year military mission in Afghanistan.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
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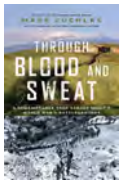
Through Blood and Sweat: A Remembrance Trek across Sicily's World War II Battlegrounds
by Mark Zuehlke
Douglas & McIntyre, 248 pages, $36.95



Through Blood and Sweat documents Operation Husky 2013, a remembrance trek across Sicily that was arranged by Montreal businessman Steve Gregory. Gregory, author Mark Zuehlke, eight other marchers, and a team of willing supporters retraced the thirty-three-day fight by Canadians to liberate the Italian island of Sicily during the Second World War.

In July 1943, the 1st Canadian Division and 1st Canadian Tank Brigade landed in Sicily as part of a massive Allied invasion force. More than 23,000 Canadians participated; 562 were killed, and more than 1,600 were wounded.

Zuehlke has already written an excellent recounting of Operation Husky that served as an important guide during the 2013 event. His new book provides a larger reflection on how Canadians remember such events and is particularly timely as we pass through the one hundredth anniversary of the First World War and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Second World War.

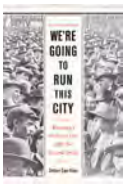
"What, in the end, distinguishes remembrance of those who served in war," Zuehlke asks, "from remembering a beloved parent or friend who passed away naturally, or even unnaturally? I think the difference is contained in the words service and duty."

Retracing the invasion provided an opportunity for Zuehlke to see the lasting effects of war through the stories passed on by the soldiers and civilians who were caught in the intense fighting for Sicily during the sweltering summer of 1943. *Through Blood and Sweat* offers an occa-

sion for all Canadians who participate in remembrance activities to think consciously about why they participate and about why an extraordinary bond to our past endures. — *Joel Ralph*

We're Going to Run This City: Winnipeg's Political Left after the General Strike

by Stefan Epp-Koop
University of Manitoba Press,
213 pages, $24.95



The politics of a place are seldom easily summarized in less than two hundred pages. Stefan Epp-Koop's *We're Going to Run This City: Winnipeg's Political Left after the General Strike* provides an apt and condensed introduction to a key moment in the prairie city's ongoing development and shows the groundwork this event laid for politics in the following decades.

Epp-Koop, who runs Winnipeg-based advocacy group Food Matters Manitoba, dives headfirst into the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, the largest labour protest in Canadian history, and asserts that the municipal level of government — an arena that is now primarily concerned with potholes, speed limits, and, well, arenas — is where some of the most progressive moves were once made. It's at this grassroots level, the author argues, that more people engage in political activity.

A relative newcomer to Winnipeg, Epp-Koop describes his fascination with his adopted city, which has been marked throughout its history by striking divisions: political, socio-economic, and ethnic, to name a few.

We're Going to Run This City explores the consequences of the general strike for Winnipeg during the 1920s and 1930s, including John Queen's election as mayor in 1934 — a significant victory for the left, considering that Queen had been jailed following the 1919 strike for "seditious conspiracy."

Epp-Koop's book provides insights about an event that was a defining moment not just for Winnipeg but for Canada as a whole. — *Laina Hughes*

BLAST RADIUS In this 1952 *Toronto Telegram* photo, Lieutenant Colonel W. Arthur Croteau points to a model of an atom bomb mushroom cloud that has been placed upon a map of Ottawa. It's one of more than two hundred scientific, military, artistic, and news photographs included in *Camera Atomica* (Black Dog Publishing, 304 pages, $34.95). Edited by John O'Brian to coincide with an exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario, in Toronto, the book explores how the camera lens has shaped public perceptions and anxieties regarding the atomic age from 1945 onwards.

Inside The Mental: Silence, Stigma, Psychiatry, and LSD

by Kay Parley
University of Regina Press,
200 pages, $24.95

Author and journalist Kay Parley spent years in a mental institution, first as a patient and then as a psychiatric nurse. Her new book covers her institutionalization at Weyburn Mental Hospital in Saskatchewan — "The Mental" — after a 1948 breakdown as well as her work there from the mid-1950s and through the 1960s.

Divided into short essay-like chapters, this mix of memoir and history is fascinating because of Parley's unique insider perspective. She entered Weyburn at a time when the asylum system was falling out of medical and political favour. Underfunding had led to abys-

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mal conditions with a custodial rather than curative approach to patients. Complicating matters for Parley was the presence of both her grandfather, diagnosed as paranoid, and her father, institutionalized since she was six.

Parley documents shifting attitudes (including her own) towards the mentally ill. She notes the beginnings of research and improvements in treatment, including greater understanding and compassion, more precise diagnoses, and pharmacological interventions, all heralded with great optimism. "The hospital was said to have been a quiet, decent place in the 1920s, before the crowding," she writes, "but it had had a bad reputation for two decades. In the pre-tranquilizer days there had been much violence, and much coercion."

By the 1950s, a new director brought in new methods and a progressive attitude. An emphasis on medical reform, modernization, and specialized training engendered a sense of excitement and the hope of positive outcomes for patients. In 1957, the hospital received an award from the American Psychiatric Association for being the most improved North American psychiatric hospital. Parley calls it "an enlightened time when our province was willing to spend so much on the mentally ill."

She had her misgivings about Weyburn. "It was crowded, noisy, smelly, shabby, with too much authority around and too many people who behaved in threatening or in particularly unintelligent ways. But in many ways I loved The Big Mental," Parley writes. "We had therapists who were warm, friendly, understanding, and encouraging." The Mental, as she poignantly notes, was home to many — including her. *— Mariianne Mays Wiebe*

CanadasHistory.ca/Books

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A flea market, circa 1910, as seen in Luc Sante's *The Other Paris*.

OTHER HISTORIES

The once-sublime city

Luc Sante provides a fascinating obituary for a lost urban landscape and vanished ways of life in Paris.

by Phil Koch

Some twenty-five years since his debut book, *Low Life* (1991), about a now-past era of his adopted hometown of New York, Belgian-born Luc Sante has composed an elegy for some of the rowdy, riotous, and occasionally bewildering pasts of Paris — which he calls "the most sublime of the world's great cities."

Sante is now a visiting professor and photo historian at Bard College in upstate New York. His latest book, *The Other Paris* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 320 pages, $32.50), is perhaps the perfect subject for this, the debut of a new, occasionally appearing column that will consider books outside the broad range of Canadian history topics that are regularly addressed in this section of the magazine. This might include books that present histories of other places or peoples, or that involve unexpected approaches to history or philosophies of history. Sante offers all of these, and more.

In *The Other Paris* we discover not the pursuits of French nobility and the haute bourgeoisie, or the monuments of church and state, not the Paris of glamour and high fashion, and certainly not the modern playground of wealthy tourists, or of technocrats, financiers, and speculators — the latter in particular being anathema to the author. It's rather the city's dim corners and vague outer reaches, home for centuries to an assortment of "rabble" and "riff-raff," that merit Sante's attention.

The eighteenth-century philosopher Immanuel Kant recognized that the sublime is not somehow the epitome of what is grand or beautiful but instead yields different emotions, stems from different sources and settings — places of dark and shadow, where amazement and wonder are regularly accompanied by trepidation and apprehension. This perhaps includes the theatres, cabarets, brothels, and dance halls of a Paris that has essentially disappeared, along with the makeshift flea markets, airless workplaces, grubby flophouses, and ragtag slums that housed the city's poor.

The book portrays a city that was in large parts unwholesome and unhealthy;

COURTESY OF FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX

but what may in retrospect seem frightful was part of everyday life for most. Much of life was lived in public and on parade, and citizens regularly took to the streets in protest or outright insurrection. The masses of ordinary people — often struggling to eke out their meagre existence, easily identifying with those who flouted laws and authorities, and eventually enjoying the portrayal of venerated outsiders in various forms of low or popular culture — "had always been the city's fundament," writes Sante.

In *The Other Paris*, Sante conjures a sense for "how deeply the uncanny is embedded in the quotidian" by considering a menagerie of outsider characters and an assortment of sometimes unusual sources, such as novelists, artists, radicals, and chroniclers of working life.

"It's not history," Sante told literary journal the *Paris Review*. "It's a very, very subjective approach to the past, to a certain time and place. It's carved in a particular way. It favours certain narratives over certain others. It's intended, above all else, to be an *experience*."

Hundreds of black-and-white images accompany Sante's text: postcards of street vendors and performers as well as drawings, caricatures, posters, and other old photographs. Chapters include Zone (about the city's more or less lawless periphery), Saint Monday (about drink), and Mort aux Vaches (about police and crime).

A number of characters populate and give direction to his narrative, including *clochards* (hobos), actors, singers, and dancers, Bohemians, prostitutes, outlaws, revolutionaries and saboteurs, but also ordinary Parisians in their village-like quartiers. But the figure that serves as the book's "exemplar" is the *flâneur*, and in particular the literary *flâneur*, who conveys often nocturnal explorations and reflections of urban life with a sense for the primacy of experience over reportage, the necessity of invoking the life of a street, a corner, a neighbourhood, a dive bar, rather than pretending to have captured its essence in prose.

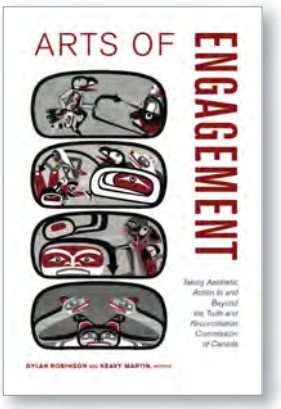
For Sante, the *flâneur* is not just a peculiarly Parisian character type but a model for how to read the text of a city and write its stories. "What the *flâneur* sees while walking around is a tremendous expanse of time in compressed and vestigial form," he writes.

This relates to his assessment of what makes a vibrant city. "The city's principal constituent matter is accrued time," Sante claims, adding: "Not everyone is happy about this, since the past is burdensome and ungovernable and never accords with totalizing ideologies or unified design theories or schemes for maximizing profit."

Like the social historian Louis Chevalier, Sante laments the great episodes of urban rationalization that have destroyed so much of Paris's built form — such as the labyrinth of winding streets, alleys, passageways, and stairs whose very reasons for being were often lost in time and whose continued existence served as reminders of the city's wealth of history, diversity of custom, range of possibilities. The latest round of "urban renewal" started in the 1960s. But much earlier, in the mid-nineteenth century, Georges-Eugène Haussmann oversaw the obliteration of the historic heart of Paris. Sante considers Haussmann, like the more recent bureaucrats, guilty of "treating the city as undifferentiated matter in need of coldly rational organizational engineering, rather than as an accumulation of people's homes and workplaces."

In the wake of these and other grand schemes, Paris has changed. Even well-meaning reformers and social activists "failed to anticipate that the poor would," according to Sante, "be surrendering the riches they actually possessed: their neighbourhoods as well as their use of time, their scavenger economy, their cooperative defences, their refusal to behave, their ability to drop out of sight, their key to the unclaimed, the scorned, the common property of the streets."

As urbanization proceeds apace and more of the world's people now live in cities than outside them, the places we have known are changing, even disappearing. In the process, Sante writes, "we have forgotten what a city was. There was a flavour to the city that has now been eradicated." *The Other Paris* is about a city that is largely gone but whose ghosts inhabit the radically altered landscape, their reverberations and echoes entertaining and occasionally discomfiting today's Parisians while offering reminders that some things very different have passed this way.



Arts of Engagement

Taking Aesthetic Action In and Beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin, editors

Addresses the role of the arts in residential school history, in Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) events, and outside the formal boundaries of the TRC process.

June 2016 | 360 pages | $39.99 paper
978-1-77112-169-9

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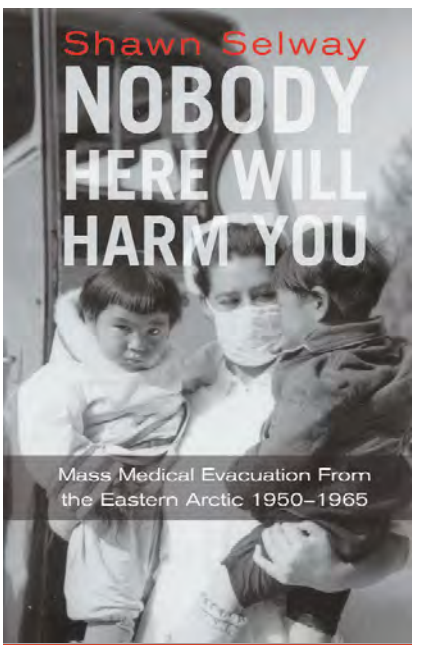

From politics to technology to human cost, cultural historian Shawn Selway considers every facet of this important episode.

Wolsak and Wynn Publishers
$25, available June 2016
www.wolsakandwynn.ca

Imagining Canada

Young artists and writers view Canada's future through the lens of reconciliation.

by Janet Walker

If reconciliation involves imagining a better Canada, then our youth are prepared to lead the way.

Their hopeful voices were heard at a ceremony this spring as Governor General David Johnston honoured ten students for their inspirational work in envisioning Canada's future.

Organized by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Imagine a Canada is part of a national competition open to grades 1 to 12 as well as to undergraduate students at the post-secondary level.

The painting shown here, by artist Megan Benoit of Lord Tweedsmuir Secondary School in Surrey, British Columbia, is just one poignant project from the inaugural event, which accepted works of art, poetry, and video as well as essays.

Ry Moran, director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation — which hosts a research collection that includes thousands of hours of survivor statements — believes that reconciliation is for everyone.

"Reconciliation, at its foundation, is a coming-togetherness, so it's for people of all walks of life, all ages, and all stations in life," he said.

Medicinal Healing, by Megan Benoit, is an abstract interpretation of the medicine wheel. In describing the piece, Benoit said: "While one cannot erase the turmoil that the Aboriginal people have experienced, and still [experience] to this day, one can attempt to sew it back together. The medicine wheel represents four main concepts: physicality, emotionalism, mentality, and spirituality. These core concepts have been tarnished, and they will never be the same. But one can hope that eventually [the wound] will heal, leaving only a scar."

"If we can take that anger or that sorrow and channel it and push that stuff forward and try to create a better society, then we are actually on a pretty good path."

For more on the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, and to see an interview with Ry Moran, go to CanadasHistory.ca/NCTR

Janet Walker is the President & CEO of Canada's History Society.

IMAGE COURTESY OF NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

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CANADA'S HISTORY

Life-sized sculptures depicting historic oil industry scenes are a highlight of the Fairbank Oil Nature Trail.

Gushing with pride

Where Ontario's oil history is well done. *by Bruce Kemp*

FOR CHARLEY FAIRBANK, THE OIL-SOAKED lands of southwestern Ontario are more than just a bit of history. The black gold flooding up from beneath the ground is like the blood of his family, and Charley wants to transfuse that blood into the body of Canadian history.

Oil bubbled out of the ground in the area long before the Europeans arrived. Chippewa craftsmen used the pitch found around the communities of Oil Springs and Petrolia to waterproof their canoes and possibly as medicine to treat wounds.

When the first oilmen began to hand-dig wells in this southeast corner of Lambton County (about seventy kilometres west of London) they found deer horns and pieces of timber bearing the marks of the axe, and, in one spot along Black Creek, a new well under excavation cut into the remains of an ancient First Nations well. "At a depth of twenty-seven feet from the surface, a pair of deer's antlers were taken from this old pit," Fairbank said.

It was at Oil Springs that James Miller Williams dug the first commercial oil well in North America in 1858. Within months of his discovery, the oil rush was on. Fairbank's great-grandfather arrived in 1861 and immediately bought land.

Today, Oil Springs is designated a national historic site, and Fairbank and his son, Charley IV, operate the oldest oil company in the world. The Fairbank family is one of the last of the oil clans still involved in an industry born in the 1850s muck and mire of Enniskillen Township.

With 350 operating wells, the 263-hectare Fairbank field produces twenty-four thousand barrels of crude annually. Even though Fairbank Oil is a commercial enterprise, Charley Fairbank is the head cheerleader promoting the birth of the oil industry as a tourist destination.

On what turned out to be the hottest day of the year, Fairbank and I hopped into his pickup. He wanted to show me his latest project, the Fairbank Oil Nature Trail, which is part of the Oil Patch Driving Tour.

Every generation of Fairbank growing up on the property was keenly aware of its diverse species. Deer, monarch butterflies, frogs, muskrat, and beaver as well as a host of insects and reptiles live here.

When he shuts off the truck's diesel engine, the sound of a rhythmic creaking accompanied by the scent of raw crude rides the wind into the cab. Contrary to popular opinion, the smell of oil isn't offensive, just a departure from everyday aromas.

BRUCE KEMP

From the walkway above Black Creek, Fairbank points out cardinal flowers and about a dozen rare species of plants growing in the creek mud. He also indicates an overgrown earthen mound. "That's a pre-contact First Nations mound," he said. "There are six of them. We haven't excavated it yet, so we're going to work with the local band to protect it and research it."

Archaeologists, I thought to myself, would have a field day here. Turns out they already have. Dr. Emory Kemp, a renowned industrial archaeologist from West Virginia University, has already visited these oil fields to look at the technology, causing Fairbank to quip, "It was as if they had been studying dinosaur fossils and stumbled on a living, breathing dinosaur."

Technology is a key part of the driving tour. Jerker lines that power the wellhead pumps provide a creaking soundtrack. It is nineteenth-century technology that still works incredibly well.

We stop at a life-sized outdoor diorama of sculpted steel representing five men and a horse. The sculpture illustrates a drilling crew operating a cable tool drill rig, which was the original technology for sinking a well and is still in use today.

Dozens of these steel folk art figures populate the landscape.

While we're stopped, Fairbank tunes his radio to a station listed on the driving guide, and we pick up a broadcast giving information about the display.

There are nine stops with audio presentations tied to them; the first stop is the Oil Museum of Canada, where you can get your bearings and tune your radio.

The indoor and outdoor displays on the oil museum's four-hectare site contain a wealth of information about the birth of the North American oil industry.

Inside the museum, which became a National Historic Site in 2004, there is a theatre with audiovisual screenings; a main gallery details life in the pioneering days of the first oil explorers; the Oil Springs gallery focuses on the discoveries, exploration, and development of the fields immediately surrounding Oil Springs; and the foreign drillers gallery tells the stories of local men who travelled the world drilling for black gold using Canadian technology.

The daughter of one Oil Springs driller married the legendary Count von Zeppelin. Another drilling family found itself trapped by the Russian Revolution in 1918 and made its escape overland in farm wagons and on horseback from Grozny, on the Black Sea, to Murmansk, in the Russian Arctic, where it continued its journey home aboard a British troop ship.

A visit to the Oil Museum of Canada can take you the better part of a day, but it's well worth it.

Bruce Kemp writes about travel and history.

Top: The town of Oil Springs, Ontario, circa 1867. Bottom: Oil shoots out of a well in Petrolia, Ontario, in 1902.

TOP: OIL MUSEUM OF CANADA. BOTTOM: ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO

Born in 1908, renowned Armenian-Canadian portrait photographer Yousuf Karsh (above) came to Canada at the age of sixteen to live with his photographer uncle. By age twenty-five Karsh had his own studio in Ottawa, and he went on to photograph Canadian and international celebrities and politicians. His 1941 portrait of then British Prime Minister Winston Churchill made Karsh famous and is scheduled to appear this year on a new British five-pound note.

A suitable memento

Several years ago, Gavin Murphy wrote in *The Beaver* about the book *Portrait in Light and Shadow: The Life of Yousuf Karsh*. Murphy bemoaned the volume's emphasis on the more celebrated subjects of the famed photographer's portraits, and he wished that it included a few examples of the less well-known individuals who posed for Karsh's camera.

The above photo portrays one such person: my paternal grandmother, Gertrude Sophia Anderson Macnab. She would have been in her late sixties or early seventies when she rode the train from Arnprior, Ontario, to Ottawa in the 1940s to visit the Karsh studio for a portrait session that had been arranged by her children. They wanted a suitable memento of their aging mother.

Gertrude Anderson was born in 1873 in Wisbech, England, and emigrated with her family to the United States in 1879.

In the early 1900s, she moved with her husband, George Fergusson Macnab, to his hometown of Arnprior, where he took over the family insurance business. George died in 1927.

For many years before she was incapacitated by illness, Gertrude was heavily involved in church and charity affairs. She died in 1966. Like most people, she lived a life that was overshadowed by the exploits of the rich and the famous — and, like most lives, hers was marked by events and encounters that deserve to be remembered.

Submitted by Ron Macnab of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

Do you have a photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If so, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o Canada's History, Bryce Hall, Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9. Or email your photo to album@CanadasHistory.ca. Please provide a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. Photos may be cropped or adjusted as necessary for presentation in the magazine. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Pitseolak Qimirpik, Cape Dorset Artist

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